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COMMENTARIES

ON

THE FOUR LAST BOOKS OF MOSES,

ARRANGED IN THE FORM OF

A HARMONY.

VOL. I.

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THE CALVIN TRANSLATION SOCIETY.

INSTITUTED IN MAY M.DCCC.XLIII.



FOR PUBLICATION OF TRANSLATIONS OF THE WORKS OF JOHN CALVIN.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION, ONE POUND, PAYABLE IN ADVANCE ON 1ST JANUARY.
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Acting and Editorial Secretary, Robert Pitcairn, F.S.A. Scot.
Calvin Office, 9, Northumberland Street, Edinburgh.

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COMMENTARIES

ON

THE FOUR LAST BOOKS OF MOSES,

ARRANGED

IN THE FORM OF A HARMONY.

BY JOHN CALVIN.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL LATIN, AND COMPARED WITH THE FRENCH EDITION; WITH ANNOTATIONS, ETC.

BY THE REV. CHARLES WILLIAM BINGHAM, M.A.,
RECTOR OF MELCOMBE-HORSEY, DORSET, AND FORMERLY FELLOW OF NEW COLLEGE, OXFORD.

VOLUME FIRST.

EDINBURGH:
PRINTED FOR THE CALVIN TRANSLATION SOCIETY.
M.DCCC.LII.

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"ST. AUGUSTINE, FOR SHARP INSIGHT AND CONCLUSIVE JUDGMENT IN EXPOSITION OF PLACES OF SCRIPTURE, WHICH HE ALWAYS MAKES SO LIQUID AND PERVIOUS, HATH SCARCE BEEN EQUALLED THEREIN BY ANY OF ALL THE WRITERS IN THE CHURCH OF GOD, EXCEPT CALVIN MAY HAVE THAT HONOUR; FOR WHOM (WHEN IT CONCERNS NOT POINTS IN CONTROVERSIE) I SEE THE JESUITS THEMSELVES, THOUGH THEY DARE NOT NAME HIM, HAVE A HIGH DEGREE OF REVERENCE."—*Dr. Donne.*

[Entered at Stationers' Hall.]

"WITH CALVIN, THE THEOLOGICAL EXPOSITION OF THE PENTATEUCH REACHED ITS HIGHEST POINT, THAT IS, RELATIVELY. HE STANDS STILL HIGHER ABOVE THOSE WHO FOLLOWED HIM THAN ABOVE HIS PREDECESSORS. IT IS CURIOUS ENOUGH HOW SUCH A LEADER SHOULD HAVE SUCH FOLLOWERS. IT CAN BE EXPLAINED ONLY ON THE SUPPOSITION THAT THEY HAVE NEVER READ HIS WORKS, OF WHICH, INDEED, WE EVERYWHERE FIND EVIDENCE."—*Dr. Hengstenberg.*

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

Coming into the field as a Translator of Calvin so late as I do, and after the various able Preliminary Notices of my predecessors in the task, it would ill become me to offer any lengthened remarks, either generally on the personal character and theological system of our illustrious author, or more particularly on his merits as a Commentator upon Scripture. It may not, however, be deemed superfluous that I should refer my readers to the brief but interesting Memoir of Calvin, written by his associate and friend Theodore Beza, and translated by Henry Beveridge, Esq., in Volume I. of Calvin's Tracts in this Series. It would, I presume, be scarcely possible to produce within a similar compass any Biography of the great Reformer which could at all be brought into competition with this. That the colouring of partiality may be discerned in it, the circumstances of the case would lead us to expect; but as to the main facts of his life, whilst there can be little ground for supposing Beza to be ignorant of them, so is he above the suspicion of having intentionally falsified them. "Every reasonable person," says Bayle, "will agree with me, that, with respect to the historical sequence of Calvin's travels, no author is more credible than Theodore Beza when the occurrences are of such a nature as neither to injure nor enhance the glory of Calvin."

It would at any rate appear to be peculiarly unseasonable, at the present moment, to attempt any new Life of Calvin,

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when an announcement has recently been made of a large amount of materials having been discovered, which, when published, will probably throw much additional light on the subject. I allude to a statement of the French correspondent of the "*Evangelical Christendom*" for December 1851, vol. v. p. 494, to the following effect:—"A young man, equally distinguished by his piety and learning, M. JULES BONNET, had been commissioned, in the reign of LOUIS PHILIPPE, to collect the unpublished Letters of CALVIN in the Public Libraries of France, Geneva, &c. He has found 497, of which 190 are written in the French language, and 307 in Latin. This correspondence promises the greatest interest. It commences in 1524, when CALVIN was yet on the benches of the University, and continues up to 1564, the period when the illustrious Reformer died. The greater part of these letters are addressed to FAREL, MELANCTHON, THEODORE BEZA, and other distinguished theologians. The French letters are written to the KING OF NAVARRE, the DUCHESS OF FERRARA, the PRINCE OF CONDE, &c. One is addressed to the DUKE OF SOMERSET, who exercised then high authority in England, and contains twenty-three pages."

It may not be impossible that a more accurate examination of these documents will prove that some of them are already before the public; yet few, I think, into whose hands this work may fall will abstain from uniting in the hope expressed by our informant, that this correspondence should be published; or, if they are at all acquainted with the writings of CALVIN, will fail to agree in the opinion that "it will present to literature some excellent models of style; to the historian, some precious documents; to the theologian, some interesting ideas; and to simple Christians, some edifying sentiments."

I would even venture here to record my own fervent aspiration, that it may please God to dispose men's hearts to afford such renewed encouragement to those who have undertaken the great national work of which this volume forms a portion, that it may not be abandoned until the whole Remains of CALVIN, including the above-mentioned letters, shall have appeared in an English dress, and until every

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emanation from his almost miraculously fertile mind shall have enriched the religious literature of our age and country. I believe, however, I am correct in saying, that it will be impossible to put the top-stone on this monument of his Christian sagacity and industry, unless every exertion be made to obtain supporters by those who are desirous of its completion.

The Work, which it is now my privilege for the first time to introduce to the English Reader, is confessedly by no means the least worthy of its Author. One of the ablest and most laborious of our own Theological critics, Mr. HARTWELL HORNE, has especially singled it out for eulogy from amongst the whole series of CALVIN'S COMMENTARIES. "His HARMONY OF THE FOUR LAST BOOKS OF THE PENTATEUCH (he says) has been much and deservedly admired for its ingenuity. The *History* contained in them forms a distinct part. The rest is comprised under the following divisions:— 1. Those passages which assert the excellency of the Law by way of *Preface;* 2. The *Ten Commandments,* under each of which are comprehended all those parts of the Law which relate to the same subject; and this forms the great body of the Harmony; 3. The *Sum of the Law,* containing those passages which enjoin Love to God, and Love to our Neighbour; 4. *The Use of the Law;* and lastly, its *Sanctions* of Promises and Threats."

I have quoted Mr. HORNE'S compendious account of the Book, in order that its character may at once be understood; and surely the very idea of thus combining and arranging this portion of Scripture, so as to present its contents in one simple and consistent whole, must strike us as indication of no ordinary grasp and originality of mind. With this Harmony before him, it is somewhat strange that LIGHTFOOT should have thus expressed himself in the Epistle Dedicatory to his "Chronicle of the Times, and the Order of the Texts of the Old Testament;" "I do not remember that I ever heard or saw this kind of task undertaken in any language, namely, 'to harmonize the Old Testament,' and to lay the current of it in a proper series; and, therefore, I acknow-

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ledge I have made a very bold venture in attempting to break this ice, and to tread in these untrodden paths, for which foolhardiness I have no other plea than my own ignorance and the reader's gentleness." It was, one would suppose, hardly within the range of possibility that his ignorance could have extended to unacquaintance with this considerable work from the pen of CALVIN; and yet, though his own plan was far more comprehensive, and at the same time less artificial in its management than that of CALVIN, at least the boast of such absolute originality as he claims, seems to be barred by the existence of the Book I have translated. It is perhaps even still more remarkable that it should be passed over altogether by Dr. TOWNSEND, in the account of previous Harmonies prefixed to his own valuable "Connexion of the Old Testament!"

The only solution I can give of this omission on the part of these two eminent writers—neither of whom would have been at all likely to do intentional injustice to the *clarum et venerabile nomen* in question—is that at which I have above hinted, viz., that whilst there are undoubtedly manifest points of similarity in their undertaking, there was still a considerable difference in the mode of its performance.

The object which CALVIN had in view, and which he has so efficiently executed, was not so much to present the narrative of each of THE FOUR LAST BOOKS OF THE PENTATEUCH in its regular order of occurrence, though it necessarily happens that, with respect to a great part of them, this must incidentally be the case. His aim was a far higher one than that of a mere Chronologist. He sought not mainly to arrange the facts of Scripture, but rather to systematize its doctrines, and to bring out the mind of the Spirit of God in the revelation of His just, and good, and holy LAW in a complete and harmonious form. His work was intended as an auxiliary in that important process of generalization, which every diligent and devout reader of THE BIBLE must to a certain extent, though sometimes even unconsciously, carry on in his own mind; not satisfying himself with the notions conveyed by isolated texts, but "comparing spiritual things

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with spiritual," until he arrives at a nearer comprehension of that perfect order which reigns in the midst of their apparent discrepancies.

The ingenuity of his arrangement it is impossible to gainsay. That it is open to objections, even of a graver character than have sometimes been alleged against ordinary HARMONIES, he seems himself to have felt; but with his usual candour and ability, he meets them in THE PREFACE, to which the reader is referred as the best apology for his motives, and the clearest exposition of his design.

But whatever may be thought of its execution, it is certain that we have here the opinions of a master-mind on various topics of paramount interest and importance, when it had attained its fullest maturity and development. We expressly learn from BEZA, *vide* Life of Calvin, p. lxxxii., that both the COMMENTARY itself, and its TRANSLATION into French, which was made by himself, were amongst the labours of 1563, the penultimate year of his mortal existence, and this statement is confirmed both by SENEBIER, as quoted in the Translator's Preface to Genesis, vol. i. p. xviii., and by CALVIN'S own Dedicatory Epistle to the French Translation of the Commentaries on the whole Pentateuch, which is given in the latter work, p. xxvii., and which bears the date of Geneva, "le dernier jour le Juillet, M.D.LXIII."

One can scarcely here forbear from a passing allusion to the gigantic, and almost incredible labour involved in these publications. "CALVIN'S diseases (says his friend and biographer) had so much increased, and were so numerous, as to make it impossible to believe that so strong and noble a mind could be any longer confined in a body so fragile, so exhausted by labour, and, in fine, so broken down by suffering. But even then he could not be persuaded to spare himself. Nay, if at any time he abstained from public duty, (and he never did so without the greatest reluctance,) he still at home gave answers to those who consulted him, or wore out his amanuenses by dictating to them, though fatigued himself." Making every allowance for the assistance he received in the mere mechanical portion of his

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Work; and viewing this arrangement, and its Commentary purely as an intellectual effort, it is surely a marvellous production under the circumstances here detailed, and, in itself, a remarkable evidence of the vast resources, and highly disciplined powers of the mind which gave it birth. Nay, more than this, may it not be fairly questioned whether it must not have been made "a labour of love" with him, and whether any less powerful impulse than love towards Him, who hath first so freely and so abundantly loved us, working in dependence upon strength from above, could have carried it through?

We may indeed well imagine, that it was an undertaking after his own heart, conceived, it may be, in earlier years, but reserved for execution as the appropriate solace of his declining age. As life wore on, or rather, in his case, we may say, as life wore out; as daily experience increasingly taught him the imperfection of human wisdom; as the difficulties of his position[1] in the van of the REFORMATION thickened around him, doubtless the Scriptures of God grew more and more precious to his soul, and were still more highly valued as the counsellors of his mind and the delight of his heart.

There were certain subjects, too, necessarily brought before him in his meditation upon these particular Books, which must have been very congenial to him. It was not unnatural that he should take pleasure in soberly and calmly reviewing those doctrines which had so largely exercised his earlier thoughts, and that the distinctive tenets, which are usually associated with his name, and which, as the Article of the Church of England testifies, are "full of sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable comfort to godly persons, and such as feel in themselves the working of the Spirit of Christ," should once more pass before him in his latter days, and demand his serious consideration. Here, then, was the opportunity. The Election of Israel, their Predestination,

[1] "Quia tu cum Bullingero *ex primis illis columnis* pene soli superestis, vobis quam diutissime (si ita Domino visum fuerit) frui cupimus."—*Grindal to Calvin*, June 19, 1563. Parker Society's Zurich Letters, 2d series, Letter xlii.

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and Calling to be the Lord's peculiar people, and the judicial blindness of wicked Pharaoh's heart, led him to reflect and speak with more than ordinary fulness upon the divine decrees of our heavenly Father; and, perhaps, some of his most prejudiced opponents might be surprised to find the limitations which his system recognised, and the moderate tone of his statements, if they could be induced to examine them here in their particular application, rather than in the cruder and harsher form of general deductions and logical definitions. At any rate—if, according to BISHOP BURNET, "the common fault on both sides (in this controversy) is, to charge one another with the consequences of their opinions, as if they were truly their tenets"—it must be confessed by all, that our Author is by no means guilty of denying the responsibility of the sinner, or the need of personal holiness in the righteous. If, elsewhere, he may have seemed to dogmatize too accurately, and too closely to confine the dealings of Almighty wisdom within the narrow tracks of human apprehension, they will perceive but little of such a spirit here. They will find him here, as in all his other Commentaries, a faithful and honest Expounder of God's Word, seeking to build upon it no theories of his own, but to elicit in all sincerity and godly simplicity the instruction it was intended to impart. The error into which he may most justly be accused of falling, is not the making it assert too much but too little. The fancies of the Rabbins and of the Allegorists were his aversion; and it may be that he sometimes ran into the opposite extreme, and cleaved too rigidly to the literal interpretation.

But there is yet another reason why so firm an upholder of the truth and authenticity of the Bible should have been greatly interested in an exposition of THE PENTATEUCH. Even before the days of CALVIN these precious Books had been a favourite point for the unbeliever's assaults. They had not, indeed, been so systematically impugned as in these latter times; but still their credit had even then been assailed with no inconsiderable subtlety, and particular points in them had been subjected to severe and unfavourable criticism. CALVIN'S remarks are not unfrequently levelled directly against

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these adversaries; but, apart from this direct advocacy of THE TRUTH, his labours indirectly furnish one of the best barriers possible against the acceptance of the notion, that THE BOOKS OF THE PENTATEUCH were but a collection of fragments, and by no means the production of a single Author. Nothing can more satisfactorily prove the unity of these Books than that homogeneous body of Truth into which CALVIN has here resolved them.

I had intended to offer some observations upon the writers who have preceded and followed CALVIN in his illustration of this part of the Bible. I find, however, that the necessity of the case would prevent me from presenting anything more than a mere Bibliographical Catalogue, which it would be easy enough to draw up, but which would here be somewhat out of place. It will be seen, that in the brief ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES appended to the text, many of them have been referred to.

For the NOTES on the Hebrew words, &c., signed W., I am indebted to my dear and venerable friend and neighbour, the Rev. HENRY WALTER, B.D. and F.R.S., Rector of Hasilbury Bryan, Dorset, formerly Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge, and Professor of Natural Philosophy in the Honourable East India Company's College at Haileybury. It is no slight personal gratification to me to have my name thus publicly associated with his; and I feel that it will operate with those, who are acquainted with his valuable Writings, as a high recommendation of the work.

In the NOTES, *C.* will signify CALVIN; *L.*, LUTHER; *S. M.*, SEBASTIAN MUNSTER; LXX, THE SEPTUAGINT; *A. V.*, our own AUTHORIZED VERSION; and *V.*, THE LATIN VULGATE.

C. W. B.

BINGHAM'S MELCOMBE,
May 12, 1852.

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COMMENTAIRES
DE M. IEAN CALUIN,
SUR LES CINQ LIURES DE MOYSE.

GENESE EST MIS À PART,

LES AUTRES QUATRE LIURES SONT DISPOSEZ
EN FORME D'HARMONIE:

AVEC CINQ INDICES, DONT LES DEVX CONTENANS LES PAS
SAGES ALLEGUEZ ET EXPOSEZ PAR L'AUTHEUR SONT
ADIOUSTEZ DE NOUUEAU EN CESTE TRADUCTION.



A GENEVE.
Imprimé par Francois Eſtiene.
M. D. LXIIII.

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THE PREFACE OF JOHN CALVIN

TO THE

FOUR LAST BOOKS OF MOSES;

ARRANGED BY HIM IN FORM OF A HARMONY,
AND ILLUSTRATED BY COMMENTARIES.

If I do not at once begin by stating my reasons for the plan I have adopted in the composition of this Work, it will undoubtedly incur the censures of many. Nor will it be attacked only by the malevolent and the envious, (a matter of little consequence,) but some will perhaps be found, who, with no other cause of disapproval, and without any malignity, will still think that I have inconsiderately, and therefore unnecessarily, altered the order which the Holy Spirit himself has prescribed to us. Now, there cannot be a doubt that what was dictated to Moses was excellent in itself, and perfectly adapted for the instruction of the people; but what he delivered in Four Books, it has been my endeavour so to collect and arrange, that, at first sight, and before a full examination of the subject, it might seem I was trying to improve upon it, which would be an act of audacity akin to sacrilege. I pass by those critics with indifference whose object is to frame causes of detraction out of nothing, and whose greatest pleasure it is to invent occasions of railing; but there will be no difficulty in conciliating those who are only unfavourable through misunderstanding, if they will but listen calmly to the course I have pursued. For I have had no other intention than, by this arrangement, to assist unpractised readers, so that they might more easily, more commodiously, and more profitably acquaint themselves with the writings

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OF MOSES; and whosoever would derive benefit from my labours should understand that I would by no means withdraw him from the study of each separate Book, but simply direct him by this compendium to a definite object; lest he should, as often happens, be led astray through ignorance of any regular plan.

These FOUR BOOKS are made up of two principal parts, viz., THE HISTORICAL NARRATIVE, and THE DOCTRINE, by which the Church is instructed in true piety, (including FAITH and PRAYER,) as well as in the fear and worship of God; and thus the rule of a just and holy life is laid down, and individuals are exhorted to the performance of their several duties. [1] This distinction MOSES does not observe in his Books, not even relating the history in a continuous form, and delivering the doctrine unconnectedly, as opportunity occurred. I admit, indeed, that whatever refers to the regulation of the conduct is comprehended in THE TEN COMMANDMENTS; but, since all have not sufficient intelligence to discern the tendency of what is elsewhere taught, or to reduce the different precepts to their proper class, there is nothing to prevent such assistance being afforded them, as, by setting before them the design of the holy Prophet, may enable them to profit more by his writings.

Moreover, the use and application of the narrative in the four Books is twofold; for the deliverance of his ancient people reflects, as in a bright mirror, the incomparable power, as well as the boundless mercy, of God in raising up, and as it were engendering his Church. But that the most gracious Father should have followed up this same people with his continual bounty even unto the end, and have so contended with their gross impiety, their detestable iniquity, and foul ingratitude, as not to cease to be more than liberal towards the unthankful and the evil, is a manifest proof of his inestimable loving-kindness; whilst we may perceive in his constant government of them, how unwearied is the course of his grace in cherishing, defending, honouring, and preserving those whom he has once embraced with his love.

[1] The whole of this passage, to the end of the paragraph, is omitted in the French Translation.

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Hence may we obtain a source of confidence; hence, too, may we learn to be bold in prayer; while, lest we should be in doubt whether these exertions of God's grace, which Israel experienced as well in their original calling as in their successive history, have any relation to ourselves also, MOSES has stated their cause to have been that gratuitous adoption, which is common to us with them, from the times that the only-begotten Son, having "broken down the middle wall of partition," vouchsafed to become our head. On the other hand, the terrible and memorable punishments, which are everywhere recounted, instruct us in reverence towards God, and inspire our hearts with awe, lest we should falsely boast ourselves to be his children, whilst indulging in the liberty of sin. For, since God so severely punished idolatry, evil affections and lusts, rebellion and other crimes, we may learn that he nowhere more evidently inflicts his judgments than upon his Church, and thus we may appropriate to the deceivers of our own day whatever happened to the hypocritical Jews.

I. THE DOCTRINE is divided into four principal Heads. In order to prepare their minds for its reception, MOSES commends the authority of the Law by many eulogies. Whatever statements, therefore, occur as to the Dignity of the Law are set down by way of *Preface*,[1] that God may be duly reverenced. Consequently, they precede in order the precepts of the Law, and will occupy the *first* place.

II. THE TEN COMMANDMENTS follow, in which God has briefly, but comprehensively summed up the Rule of a Just and Holy Life; yet so as not to separate from them those interpretations which the Lawgiver has added unconnectedly. For many Precepts, which are not found in the Two Tables, yet differ not at all from them in sense; so that due care must be taken to affix them to their respective Commandments in order to present the Law as a whole.

III. The Third Head of Doctrine consists of[2] SUPPLE-

[1] "Afin qu'elle (*i.e.*, la Loy) ait envers nous telle reverence qu'elle merite;"—In order that the Law may receive from us the reverence it deserves.—*French Trans.*

[2] "Appendices."—*Lat.* "Dependances."—*Fr.*

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MENTS; by which word I mean, with respect to the First Table, the Ceremonies and the outward Exercises of Worship; with respect to the Second Table, the Political Laws, for the object of both these parts is merely to aid in the observance of the Moral Law; and it is not a little important, that we should understand that the Ceremonies and the Judicial Ordinances neither change nor detract from the rule laid down in the Ten Commandments; but are only helps, which, as it were, lead us by the hand to the due Worship of God, and to the promotion of justice towards men. We are aware that of old there was a constant controversy of the Prophets against the Jewish people; because, whilst strenuously devoting themselves to Ceremonies, as if True Religion and Holiness were comprised in them, they neglected real righteousness.

Therefore, God protests that he never enjoined anything with respect to the Sacrifices: and he pronounces all External Rites but vain and trifling, if the very least value be assigned to them apart from the Ten Commandments. Whence we more certainly arrive at the conclusion to which I have adverted, viz., that they are not, to speak correctly, of the substance of the law, nor avail of themselves in the Worship of God, nor are required by the Lawgiver himself as necessary, or even as useful, unless they sink into this inferior position. In fine, they are appendages, which add not the smallest completeness to the Law, but whose object is to retain the pious in the Spiritual Worship of God, which consists of Faith and Repentance, of Praises whereby their gratitude is proclaimed, and[1] even of the endurance of the Cross. As to all the Political Ordinances, nothing will obviously be found in them, which at all adds to the perfection of The Second Table: therefore it follows, that nothing can be wanted as the rule of a good and upright life beyond the Ten Commandments.

IV. The last Part shews THE END AND USE OF THE LAW; and thence its usefulness is very extensive. For how would it profit us to be instructed in righteousness of life, unless the

[1] Et aussi de s'humilier pour porter en patience toutes afflictions;" and also in humbling themselves to bear patiently all afflictions.—*Fr. Trans.*

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perception of our guilt and iniquity induced us to seek after the remedy? But when God allures us so gently and kindly by his promises, and again pursues us with the thunders of his curse, it is partly to render us inexcusable, and partly to shut us up deprived of all confidence in our own righteousness, so that we may learn to embrace his Covenant of Grace, and flee to Christ, who is THE END OF THE LAW. This is the intention of The Promises, in which he declares that he will be merciful, since there is forgiveness ready for the sinner, and when he offers the spirit of Regeneration. On this depends that sentence of St. Paul, that *Christ is the end of the Law.* Still I do not so distinguish this class from the foregoing, as if it had nothing in common with them. For, before arriving at it, it will be often necessary to refer both to the terrible ruin of the human race, as well as to the peculiar blessing of Adoption, and to that increasing flow of fatherly love which God extends to his people. For all the expiations have no other meaning than that God will be always merciful, as often as the sinner shall flee to the refuge of his pardon. But how needful this division is will be best understood as we proceed.

THE SONG OF MOSES and HIS DEATH will be the conclusion of the Four Books.

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THE FOUR LAST BOOKS OF MOSES

ARRANGED IN THE FORM OF

A HARMONY, WITH COMMENTARIES.

EXODUS.—CHAPTER I.

1. Now these *are* the names of the children of Israel, which came into Egypt: every man and his household came with Jacob.
2. Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah,
3. Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin,
4. Dan and Naphtali, Gad and Asher.
5. And all the souls that came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy souls: for Joseph was in Egypt *already*.
6. And Joseph died, and all his brethren, and all that generation.
7. And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them.

1. Hæc sunt nomina filiorum Israel qui venerunt in Ægyptum cum Jahacob: quisque cum familia sua venit.
2. Reuben, Simeon, Levi, et Jehudah,
3. Issachar, Zabulon, et Benjamin,
4. Dan, Nephthali, Gad, et Asser.
5. Fuerunt autem omnes animæ egressæ ex femore Jahacob, septuaginta animæ, Joseph autem erat in Ægypto.
6. Mortuus vero est Joseph, et omnes fratres eius, et tota ætas illa.
7. Porro creverunt filii Israel, et aucti sunt, et multiplicati et roborati quamplurimum; adeo ut plena ipsis esset terra.

1. *These are the names.* It is the intention of MOSES to describe the miraculous deliverance of the people, (from whence the Greeks gave the name to the book;) but, before he comes to that, he briefly reminds us that the promise given to Abraham was not ineffectual, that his seed should be multiplied "as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore." (Gen. xxii. 17.) This, then,

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is the commencement of the book,—that although their going down from the land of Canaan into Egypt might have seemed at the time as it were the end and abolition of God's covenant, yet in his own time he abundantly accomplished what he had promised to his servant as to the increase of his descendants. However, he only mentions by name the twelve patriarchs who went down with their father Jacob, and then sums up the whole number of persons, as in two other passages. (Gen. xlvi. 27, and Deut. x. 22.) The calculation is perfectly accurate, if Jacob is counted among the thirty and six souls in the first catalogue. For it is a far-fetched addition of the Rabbins[1] to count in Jochebed the mother of Moses, to complete the number; and it is not probable that a woman, who was afterwards born in Egypt, should be reckoned among the men whom Jacob brought with him. If any object that the seventy are said to have "come out of the loins of Jacob," the discrepancy is easily explained by the common scriptural use of the figure *synecdoche*.[2] That he from whom the others sprung is not excluded, we gather from the words of Moses, (Deut. x. 22,) "Thy fathers went down into Egypt with threescore and ten

[1] It may be noticed, once for all, that Calvin's references to Rabbinical expositions of supposed difficulties are generally references to what Sebastian Munster had inserted at the close of each chapter of his version of the Old Testament, which is described as follows in the title-page to its second edition, Basle, 1546:—"En tibi Lector Hebraica Biblia, Latina planeque nova Sebast. Munsteri tralatione, post omnes omnium hactenus ubivis gentium editiones evulgata, et quoad fieri potuit Hebraicæ veritati conformata: adjectis insuper e Rabbinorum commentariis annotationibus." The notion that Jochebed was included in the enumeration, is mentioned by S. M. in the annotations on Genesis xlvi. 27. In that verse, as given in our authorized version, *which came* must be understood to agree with *house*, the Hebrew being הבאה. The persons of that house properly of Jacob's own blood were seventy in number, as appears from the enumeration in that chapter, including a daughter (v. 15) and a granddaughter, (v. 17.) The number in Stephen's speech is supposed by many to be taken from the Septuagint, which says that nine souls were born to Joseph in Egypt, and so makes the whole amount seventy-five, both in Gen. xlvi. and in Exod. i. But Stephen spoke of the number of his kindred whom Joseph sent for, and may reasonably be supposed to have meant thereby Jacob and his eleven sons, with their wives and fifty-three male children, which would amount to seventy-five souls.—*W.*

[2] The French translation thus explains this figure: "de prendre le tout pour une partie, ou une partie pour le tout,"—to take the whole for a part, or a part for the whole.

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persons; and now the Lord thy God hath made thee as the stars of heaven for multitude." But there is no reason to add five more, as we read in the address of Stephen recorded by Luke, (Acts vii. 14;) for we cannot be surprised that in this mode of expressing numbers this error should have occurred by the introduction of a single letter. Should any objector make this an handle for controversy, we should remember that the Spirit, by the mouth of Paul, does not warn us without purpose "not to give heed to genealogies." (1 Tim. i. 4.)

6. *And Joseph died.* The Rabbins ignorantly conclude from this expression that Joseph died first of his brethren, whereas it is evident that the others were passed over, and his name was expressly mentioned to do him honour, as being the only one then in authority. How long they survived their father, Moses does not say, but only marks the beginning of the change,—as much as to say, the Israelites were humanely treated for a considerable space of time; so that the condition of those who went down with Jacob was tolerable, since, free from all injustice and tyranny, they tranquilly enjoyed the hospitality accorded to them. At the same time, he gives us to understand that, when all that generation was gone, the desire and the memory of the land of Canaan, which they had never seen, might have died out of the minds of their descendants, if they had not been forcibly aroused to seek after it. And unquestionably, since that people were forgetful and careless of meditating on God's mercies, God could not have better provided for their salvation than by allowing them to be cruelly tried and afflicted; otherwise, as though their origin had been in Egypt, they might have preferred to have remained for ever in their nest, and by that indifference the hope of the promised heritage would have been effaced from their hearts.

7. *And the children of Israel were fruitful.*[1] To what an extent they increased Moses relates in the 12th chapter,

[1] שרץ, rendered in *A. V. increased abundantly*,—occurs first in Gen. i. 20, where it is rendered *bring forth abundantly*. As a noun it signifies reptiles. מאד, *meod;* in *A. V. exceeding* is repeated twice after עצמו, *they waxed mighty;* but may properly be considered as augmenting the force of each of the preceding verbs.—*W.*

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viz., to the number of 600,000, besides women and children; which was certainly an incredible increase for so short a time. For, though 430 years be counted from the date of the covenant with Abraham to the departure of the people, it is clear that half of them had elapsed before Jacob went down into Egypt; so that the Israelites sojourned in that land only 200 years, or a little more—say ten years more. How then could it come to pass that in so short a time a single family could have grown into so many myriads? It would have been an immense and extraordinary increase if 10,000 had sprung from every tribe; but this more than quadruples that number. Wherefore certain sceptics, perceiving that the relation of Moses surpasses the ordinary ratio of human propagation, and estimating the power of God by their own sense and experience, altogether refuse to credit it. For such is the perverseness of men, that they always seek for opportunities of despising or disallowing the works of God; such, too, is their audacity and insolence that they shamelessly apply all the acuteness they possess to detract from his glory. If their reason assures them that what is related as a miracle is possible, they attribute it to natural causes,—so is God robbed and defrauded of the praise his power deserves; if it is incomprehensible to them, they reject it as a prodigy.[1] But if they cannot bring themselves to acknowledge the interference of God except in matters by the magnitude of which they are struck with astonishment, why do they not persuade themselves of the truth of whatever common sense repudiates? They ask how this can be, as if it were reasonable that the hand of God should be so restrained as to be unable to do anything which exceeds the bounds of human comprehension. Whereas, because we are naturally so slow to profit by his ordinary operations, it is rather necessary that we should be awakened into admiration by extraordinary dealings.

Let us conclude, then, that since Moses does not here speak of the natural course of human procreation, but celebrates a miracle unheard of before, by which God ratified the truth of his promise, we should judge of it perversely,

[1] French, "un monstre incroyable;" an incredible prodigy.

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and maliciously, if we measure it by our own feeble reason, instead of meditating with reverence upon what far transcends all our senses. Let us rather remember how God reproves his unbelieving people by the Prophet Isaiah. (li. i.) For, in order to prove that it would not be difficult for Him, in spite of the small number to which the Israelites were reduced, to produce a great multitude, He bids them look into "the hole of the pit from whence they were digged," viz., to Abraham, and Sarah that bare them, whom he multiplied though alone, and childless. Certain Rabbins, after their custom, imagine that four infants were produced at a birth; for as often as they meet with any point which perplexes them, they gratuitously invent whatever suits them, and then obtrude their imaginations as indubitable facts; and proceed foolishly, and unseasonably, to discuss that this is physically probable. There are Christians, too, who, with little consideration, have imitated them here, contending that what Moses describes is in accordance with experience, because the fecundity of certain nations has been almost as great. We indeed sometimes see confirmed by remarkable examples what the Psalmist says, (Ps. cvii. 36,) that God "maketh the hungry to dwell" in the wilderness, "that they may prepare a city for habitation, and sow the fields, and plant vineyards, which may yield fruits of increase; and he blesseth them also, so that they are multiplied greatly;" as also, that "He turneth a fruitful land into barrenness," and strips it of inhabitants; but the design of Moses is to shew, that there never was any fecundity, which was not inferior to the increase of the people of Israel. Hence his comparison between the seventy souls, and the multitude which proceeded from them, that this special blessing of God might be distinguished from ordinary cases; hence too the accumulated expressions, which undoubtedly are meant for amplification, that "they were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them." For the repetition of the adverb, *Meod, Meod*, marks an unusual abundance. Nor do I reject the conjecture of some, that in the word שָׁרַץ, *sharatz*, there is a metaphor taken from fishes, but I know not

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whether it is very sound, since the word is used generally for any multiplication.

8. Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph.

9. And he said unto his people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel *are* more and mightier than we:

10. Come on, let us deal wisely with them; lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies, and fight against us, and *so* get them up out of the land.

11. Therefore they did set over them task-masters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh treasure-cities, Pithom and Raamses.

8. Surrexit autem rex novus super Ægyptum, qui non noverat Joseph.

9. Dixitque ad populum suum, Ecce, populus filiorum Israel multus et robustus præ nobis.

10. Agedum, prudenter nos geramus erga illum, ne multiplicetur; ne accidat, si obvenerit bellum, jungatur ipse quoque hostibus nostris, et pugnet contra nos, ascendatque e terra.

11. Constituerunt igitur super illum præfectos vectigalium,[1] ut affligerent illum oneribus suis: extruxeruntque urbes munitas Pharaoni Pithom et Rhameses.[2]

8. *Now there arose a new king.* When more than one hundred years had been happily passed in freedom and repose, the condition of the elect people began to be changed. Moses relates that the commencement of their troubles proceeded from jealousy, and from the groundless fear of the Egyptians, because they conceived that danger might arise from this strange nation, unless they hastened to oppress it. But before he comes to this, he premises that the remembrance of the benefits received from Joseph had departed, because it might have in some measure mitigated their cruelty, had it still been unimpaired. It is probable that this oblivion of the gratitude due to him arose from the moderation of Joseph; for if he had demanded great privileges for his people, and immunity from tributes and burdens, the remembrances of the saving of the country by an Israelite would have been famous for many ages; but it appears that he was content with the kind hospitality afforded them, that his brethren might dwell comfortably, and without molestation in the land of Goshen, because he wished them to be sojourners there until the time of deliverance arrived. And

[1] שרי מסים. *S. M.*, *Buxtorf*, and most of the modern lexicographers, agree with *C.* in rendering these words *officers over the tributes;* though the LXX., and the *V.*, and the *A. V.*, render מסם here *labours*, or *tasks.*—*W.*

[2] Vel recondendæ annonæ, *C.*, or for storing corn.

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in this way he best provided for their safety, lest being thus ensnared, they might have fallen into the nets of destruction. But in proportion as the moderation of the holy man exposed them not to jealousy and complaint, so was the ingratitude of the Egyptians less excusable in forgetting, after little more than a single century, that remarkable benefit, which should have been everywhere preserved in their public monuments, lest the name of Joseph should ever perish. Their unkindness, then, was intolerable, in refusing that his kindred and descendants should sojourn with them, since they ought to have ascribed the safety of themselves and their country, after God, to him, or rather under the hand and with the blessing of God. But this disease has always been flagrant in the world; and certainly it is good for us that evil should ever be our reward from men for our kindnesses, that we may learn in the performance of our duty to look to God alone, since otherwise we are unduly addicted to conciliate favour and applause for ourselves, or to seek after more earthly advantages. Still it was no common return which the Israelites had liberally received during more than 100 years for Joseph's sake, that they lived comfortably in a proud, avaricious, and cruel nation. Nevertheless, whatever happens, although we are not only defrauded of all recompense, but even although many of whom we have deserved well conspire for our destruction, let us never regret having done rightly; and, in the meantime, let us learn that nothing is more effective to restrain the desire of doing wrong, than those ties of mutual connexion, by which God has bound us together.[1] But, although the favour conferred by Joseph had been forgotten by all, the shame and sin of ingratitude cleaves especially to the king; in whom it was more than base to forget by whose industry and care he received so rich a yearly revenue. For the holy Patriarch, by buying up the land, had obtained a fifth part of the produce as a yearly tribute for the king. But so are tyrants accustomed to engulf whatever is paid them, without considering by what right it is acquired.

[1] "Nous faisant servir les uns aux autres;" causing us to serve one another.— *French.*

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9. *And he said unto his people.* That is to say, in a public assembly, such as kings are wont to hold for consultation on public affairs. As if Moses had said that this point was proposed by the king for deliberation by his estates; viz., that because it was to be apprehended that the Israelites, trusting in their multitude and strength, might rise in rebellion, or might take advantage of any public disturbance to shake off the yoke and to leave Egypt, they should be anticipated, and afflicted with heavy burdens, to prevent their making any such attempt. This Pharaoh calls[1] "dealing wisely with them;" for though the word חכם, *chakam*, is often taken, in a bad sense, to mean "to overreach with cunning," still in this case he concealed under an honest pretext the injury which he proposed to do them, alleging that prudent advice should be taken lest the Egyptians might suffer great loss through their carelessness and delay. This was common with heathen nations, to profess in their counsels, that what was right should be preferred to what was profitable; but, when it comes to the point, covetousness generally so blinds everybody, that they lose their respect for what is right, and are hurried away headlong to their own advantage. They make out too that what is advantageous is necessary; and so persuade themselves that whatever they are compelled to do is right. For that specious yet fallacious pretext readily occurs, and easily deceives, that, when any danger is apprehended, it ought to be met. By the tragic poets, indeed, that detestable sentiment, *occupandum esse scelus*, "that we should be beforehand in crime," is attributed to wicked and desperate characters; because our nature convinces us that it is unjust and absurd; and yet is it commonly considered the best mode of precaution, so that only those are accounted provident who consult for their own security by injuring others, if occasion requires it. From this source almost all wars proceed; because, whilst every prince fears his neighbour, this fear so fills him with apprehension, that he does

[1] נתחכמה. In *A. V.*, *Let us deal wisely.* If *C.* be justified in saying that חכם if often employed for the wisdom which is evil, it is very much more often used for wisdom in a favourable sense.—*W.*

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not hesitate to cover the earth with human blood. Hence, too, amongst private individuals, arises the license for deceit, murder, rapine, and lying, because they think that injuries would be repelled too late, unless they respectively anticipated them. But this is a wicked kind of cunning, (however it may be varnished over with the specious name of foresight,) unjustly to molest others for our own security. I fear this or that person, because he both has the means of injuring me, and I am uncertain of his disposition towards me; therefore, in order that I may be safe from harm, I will endeavour by every possible means to oppress him. In this way the most contemptible, and imbecile, if he be inclined to mischief, will be armed for our hurt, and so we shall stand in doubt of the greater part of mankind. If thus every one should indulge his own distrust, while each will be devising to do some injury to his possible enemies, there will be no end to iniquities. Wherefore we must oppose the providence of God to these immoderate cares and anxieties which withdraw us from the course of justice. Reposing on this, no fear of danger will ever impel us to unjust deeds or crooked counsels. In the words of Pharaoh, all is otherwise; for, having given warning that the Israelites might, if they would, be injurious, he advises that their strength should in some way or other be broken. For, when we have once determined to provide for our own advantage, or quiet, or safety, we ask not the question whether we are doing right or wrong.

Behold, the people. It not unfrequently happens that the minds of the wicked are aroused to jealousy by the mercies of God, acting like fans to light up their wrath. Nevertheless, the very least proof of his favour ought not on that account to be less agreeable to us, because it is made an occasion to the wicked of dealing more cruelly with us. In fact, God thus attempers his bounty towards us, lest we should be too much taken up with earthly prosperity. Thus the blessing on which all his happiness depended banished Jacob from the home of his father, and from his promised inheritance; but yet he assuaged his grief with this single consolation, that he knew God to be reconciled to him. So

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also his posterity, the more they experienced of God's goodness towards them, the more they were exposed to the enmity of the Egyptians. But Pharaoh, to render them hated, or suspected, refers to their power, and accuses them of disaffection, whereof they had given no token. Yet he does not accuse them of rebellion, as if they would take armed possession of the kingdom, but that they would depart elsewhere; whence we may conjecture, that they made no secret of the hope which God had given them of their return. But this seemed a plausible excuse enough, that it was anything but just for those, who had of their own accord sought the protection of the king, to be freely sent away; and thus[1] Isaiah speaks of it. (Chap. lii. 4.)

11. *Therefore they did set over them.* The Egyptians devised this remedy for gradually diminishing the children of Israel. Since they are subjects, they may afflict them with burdens, to depress them; and this slavery will weaken and decrease them. But their power over them as subjects should not have been carried so far as to impose upon inoffensive persons, to whom they had granted free permission to reside among them, these new tributes; for they ought first to have considered upon what conditions they had been admitted. The exaction, then, by which Pharaoh broke faith with them, was in itself unjust; but the crime to which he proceeded was still greater, because he did not simply seek for pecuniary advantage, but desired to afflict the wretched people by the heaviness of their burdens. For the Israelites were not only compelled to pay tribute, but were put to servile labour, as Moses immediately adds. As to the two cities, it is doubtful in what sense they were called *miscenoth.*[2] This word is sometimes taken for cellars and granaries, or repositories of all things necessary as provision; but, as it sometimes signifies "fortresses," it will not be an unsuitable

[1] "Comme de faict Isaie dit que les Egyptiens ont eu plus de couleur de tenir le peuple de Dieu en servitude, que les Assyriens, qui les sont venus molester sans titre;" as, in fact, Isaiah says that the Egyptians had more excuse for keeping God's people in servitude than the Assyrians, who came to molest them without pretext.—*Fr.*

[2] מסכנות, *miscenoth.* The LXX. alone gives some countenance to *C.'s* last interpretation of this word, by rendering it πόλεις ἰσχυρὰς.—*W.*

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meaning, that they were commanded to build with their own hands the prisons, which might prevent them from departing. For it is clear from many passages (Gen. xlvii. 11; Exod. xii. 37; Num. xxxiii. 3) that Rhameses was situated in that part of the country, and we shall presently see that the children of Israel went out from Rhameses.

12. But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were grieved because of the children of Israel.

13. And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour.

14. And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field: all their service, wherein they made them serve, *was* with rigour.

12. Quo autem magis premebant eum, magis crescebat et augebatur: et anxietate constricti sunt propter filios Israel.

13. Itaque adegerunt in servitutem filios Israel cum sævitia.

14. Proinde amara illis fuit vita ipsorum in servitute dura, in cæmento, in lateribus, et in omni opere agresti: quia servitium omne eorum quo serviebant illis, erat cum sævitia.

12. *But the more.* Moses relates the contest between the mercy of God and the cruelty of the king of Egypt. When, therefore, the wretched Israelites were tyrannically afflicted, he says that God came to their aid, and so powerfully that his interference was successful. Thus was that wicked and deceitful design frustrated, which the Egyptians had set on foot for destroying the Church. Thence may we, too, conceive the hope, that whatsoever the wicked imagine against us will come to nought, because God's hand is greater, and shall prevail. But we must bear afflictions patiently, because he would have us struggle against, and rise under the weight imposed upon us;[1] and because we know that it is the peculiar office of God to oppose himself to unjust counsels, in order that they may not succeed, let us learn to abstain from all deceit and violence, lest we wantonly provoke God. But this passage is especially intended to console the believer, that he may be prepared to take up his cross more patiently; since God is sufficient to supply the help, to which the wrath of the wicked must finally yield. What is said in the second part of the verse, that the Egyptians[2] were grieved, means, that they became more anxious, as they saw that

[1] "A la façon de la palme;" like the palm-tree.—*Fr.*

[2] ויקצו, *C., And they were burdened with anxiety.* In *A. V., And they were grieved.* The verb קוץ is generally taken for *to loathe.*—*W.*

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they availed nothing, and that their unexpected increase threatened still greater danger; for, since they feared the Israelites before they had afflicted them, no wonder that they felt alarmed lest they should avenge themselves when provoked. And hence the profitable instruction may be gathered, that while the wicked proceed to horrible crimes in order to insure their safety, the Almighty visits them with the very just return, that thus their anxiety is augmented. Some render it, "the Egyptians hated the people of Israel;" and so the word קוּץ, *kutz*, is sometimes taken, but the construction of the passage demands the rendering which I have given.

13. *And the Egyptians made.* Thus Moses informs us that, so far from being induced to kindness by their fears, they were rather hardened, and spurred on to greater cruelty; for the wicked do not perceive that God is against them, when their perverse strivings are unsuccessful; and if this thought ever arises, still the blind impetuosity of their folly hurries them forwards, so that they doubt not to be able in their obstinate lust to prevail even in opposition to God; as will be made clearer in the progress of this history. The cruelty of the exactions is expressed, when he says that "their lives were made bitter," nothing being sweeter than life; therefore, it appears, that their miseries were extreme and intolerable, which made life burdensome. He confirms this in other words, and also specifies their tasks, that they were engaged "in mortar and in brick, and in all manner of (similar) services." He twice repeats that they were treated with rigour, *i.e.*, harshly.[1]

15. And the king of Egypt spake to the Hebrew midwives; (of which the name of the one *was* Shiphrah, and the name of the other Puah;)

16. And he said, When ye do the office of a midwife to the Hebrew women, and see *them* upon the stools, if it *be* a son, then ye shall kill him; but if it *be* a daughter, then she shall live.

17. But the midwives feared God,

15. Dixit etiam Pharao rex Ægypti ad obstetrices Hebræas, quarum unius nomen erat Sephera, alterius Puah.

16. Sic dixit, Quando adjuvabitis ad partum Hebræas, et videbitis in illis quod sit masculus, interficite eum: si autem sit fœmina, vivat.

17. Timuerunt vero obstetrices

[1] "Par lequel mot il intend inhumanité, ou grande rudesse;" by which word he means inhumanity, or great severity.—*Fr.*

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and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the men-children alive.

18. And the king of Egypt called for the midwives, and said unto them, Why have ye done this thing, and have saved the men-children alive?

19. And the midwives said unto Pharaoh, Because the Hebrew women *are* not as the Egyptian women; for they *are* lively, and are delivered ere the midwives come in unto them.

20. Therefore God dealt well with the midwives: and the people multiplied, and waxed very mighty.

21. And it came to pass, because the midwives feared God, that he made them houses.

22. And Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive.

Deum, nec fecerunt sicut præceperat illis rex Ægypti; conservaruntque masculos in vita.

18. Et vocans Pharao obstetrices, dixit illis, Quare fecistis rem hanc, et servastis masculos?

19. Responderunt obstetrices Pharaoni, Quia non sunt Hebrææ mulieres ut Ægyptiæ: sunt enim vegetæ, et priusquam veniat ad eas obstetrix, pariunt.

20. Benefecit ergo Deus obstetricibus: et multiplicatus est populus, et roborati sunt vehementer.

21. Et factum est, quia timuerunt obstetrices Deum, fecit illis domos.

22. Tunc præcepit Pharao cuncto populo suo, dicens, Omnem natum masculum in flumen projicite: omnem vero fœminam vivam servabitis.

15. *And the king of Egypt spake.* The tyrant now descends from the open violence and cruelty which had availed nothing, to secret plots and deceit. He desires the infants to be killed at their birth; and commands the midwives to be the instruments of this dreadful barbarity. We read of no such detestable example of inhumanity since the world began. I admit it has occasionally happened, that, upon the capture of a city, the conquerors have not spared even children and infants; that is to say, either in the heat of battle, or because the defence had been too obstinate, and they had lost many of their men, whose death they would avenge. It has happened, too, that an uncle, or brother, or guardian, has been impelled by the ambition of reigning to put children to death. It has happened, again, that in the detestation of a tyrant, and to destroy the very memory of his family, his whole offspring has been slain; and some have proceeded to such cruelty against their enemies, as to tear the little ones from their mothers' breasts. But never did any enemy, however implacable, ever so vent his wrath against a whole nation, as to command all its male offspring to be destroyed in the midst of peace. This was a trial, such as to inflict a heavy blow on men of the utmost firm-

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ness, much more to bring low a fainting people, already weary of their lives. For, at first sight, each would think it more advantageous and desirable for them to sink down into an humbler state, than that the wrath of their enemies should be thus provoked against them by the blessings of God. And it is probable, such was the prostration of their minds, that they were not only sorely smitten, but almost stupified. For nothing else remained, but that the men should die without hope of offspring, and that the name and race of Abraham should soon be cut off, and thus all God's promises would come to nought. In these days, in which we have to bear similar insults, and are urged to despair, as if the Church would soon be utterly destroyed, let us learn to hold up this example like a strong shield: seeing that it is no new case, if immediate destruction seem to await us, until the divine aid appears suddenly and unexpectedly in our extremity. Josephus falsely conjectures that the midwives were Egyptian women, sent out as spies; whereas Moses expressly says, that they had been the assistants and attendants of the Hebrew women in their travail; and this erroneous idea is plainly refuted by the whole context, in which it especially appears that they were restrained by the fear of God from yielding to the sinful desire of the tyrant. Hence it follows, that they were previously possessed with some religious feeling. But another question arises, why two midwives only are mentioned by name, when it is probable that, in so great a population, there were many? Two replies may be given; either that the tyrant addressed himself to these two, who might spread the fear of his power amongst the others; or, that, desiring to proceed with secret malice, he made a trial of the firmness of these two, and if he had obtained their acquiescence, he hoped to have easily succeeded with the others; for shame forbade him from issuing an open and general command.

17. *But the midwives feared God.* Moses does not mean that they were then first affected with the fear of God; but he assigns this reason why they did not obey his unjust command, viz., because reverence towards God had greater influence with them. And certainly, as all our affections

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are best directed by this rein, so also it is the surest shield for resisting all temptations, and a firm support to uphold our minds from wavering in seasons of danger. Now, they not only dreaded this crime as being cruel and inhuman; but because purer religion and piety flourished in their hearts; for they knew that the seed of Abraham was chosen of God, and had themselves experienced that it was blessed; and hence it was natural to feel, that it would be an act of very gross impiety to extinguish in it the grace of God. We must also observe the *antithesis* between the fear of God and the dread of punishment, which might have deterred them from doing right. Although tyrants do not easily allow their commands to be despised, and death was before their eyes, they still keep their hands pure from evil. Thus, sustained and supported by reverential fear of God, they boldly despised the command and the threatenings of Pharaoh. Wherefore those, whom the fear of men withdraws from the right course, betray by their cowardice an inexcusable contempt of God, in preferring the favour of men to his solemn commands. But this doctrine extends still more widely; for many would be[1] more than preposterously wise, whilst, under pretext of due submission, they obey the wicked will of kings in opposition to justice and right, being in some cases the ministers of avarice and rapacity, in others of cruelty; yea, to gratify the transitory kings of earth, they take no account of God; and thus, which is worst of all, they designedly oppose pure religion with fire and sword. It only makes their effrontery more detestable, that whilst they knowingly and willingly crucify Christ in his members, they plead the frivolous excuse, that they obey their princes according to the word of God; as if he, in ordaining princes, had resigned his rights to them; and as if every earthly power, which exalts itself against heaven, ought not rather most justly to be made to give way. But since they only seek to escape the reprobation of men for their criminal obedience, let them not be argued with by long discussions, but rather referred to the judgment of women; for the ex-

[1] This somewhat harsh expression is thus translated in Fr. ver., "veulent estre sages en despit de nature;" would be wise in spite of nature.

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ample of these midwives is abundantly sufficient for their condemnation; especially when the Holy Spirit himself commends them, as not having obeyed the king, because they feared God.

18. *And the king of Egypt called for the midwives.* He was not reduced to a more moderate course by equity or mercy; but because he dared not openly expose to slaughter the wretched and harmless infants at their birth, lest such atrocity should arouse the wrath of the Israelites to vengeance. He therefore secretly sends for the midwives, and inquires why they have not executed his murderous command? I doubt not, however, that he was restrained rather by the fear of rebellion than by shame.[1] In the answer of the midwives two vices are to be observed, since they neither confessed their piety with proper ingenuity, and what is worse, escaped by falsehood. For the fabulous story which the Rabbins invent to cover their fault, must be rejected, viz., that they did not come in time to the Hebrew women, because they had warned them of the wicked design of the king; and so it came to pass that they were not present when they were delivered. What can be more tame than this invention, when Moses shews in his narrative that they were guilty of falsehood? Some assert that this kind of lie,[2] which they call "the lie officious, or serviceable," is not reprehensible; because they think that there is no fault where no deceit for the purpose of injury is used.[3] But I

[1] Lightfoot, in his Sermon on Difficulties of Scripture, (Pitman's edition, vii. 209,) says, "How many, in expounding that place, do roundly conclude, they told a lie to save their stake; when, as I suppose, it were no hard thing to shew, that the thing they spake was most true," &c. And, again, in his "Handful of Gleanings out of the Book of Exodus," vol. ii. 357, he has a short dissertation, headed, "The words of the Hebrew Midwives not a lie, but a glorious confession of their faith." In opposition to Calvin, he considers them to have been Egyptian women.

[2] "Qui tend a faire plaisir;" which tends to give pleasure.—*Fr.*

[3] Mendacium dividitur ratione culpæ et finis; officiosum, jocosum, et perniciosum.—*S. Thom.*, a. 2. Mendacium officiosum dicitur, quod committitur solum causâ utilitatis propriæ vel alienæ; *e.g.*, quis dicit, se non habere pecuniam, ne iis spolietur a militibus.—*Dens. Tractatus de reliquis virtutibus justitiæ annexis.* Coloniæ, 1776, tom. iii. p. 396. The subject is discussed by Peter Martyr, *Loci Communes, Classis Secunda*, cap. xiii., with much reference to the Treatises of Augustin *de Mendacio*, in which this passage is treated of. In Augustin's letter to Jerome, lxxxii., speaking

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hold, that whatever is opposed to the nature of God is sinful; and on this ground all dissimulation, whether in word or deed, is condemned, as I shall more largely discuss in explaining the law, if God grants me time to do so. Wherefore both points must be admitted, that the two women lied, and, since lying is displeasing to God, that they sinned. For, as in estimating the conduct of saints we should be just and humane interpreters; so also superstitious zeal must be avoided in covering their faults, since this would often infringe on the direct authority of Scripture. And, indeed, whensoever the faithful fall into sin, they desire not to be lifted out of it by false defences, for their justification consists in a simple and free demand of pardon for their sin. Nor is there any contradiction to this in the fact, that they are twice praised for their fear of God, and that God is said to have rewarded them; because in his paternal indulgence of his children he still values their good works, as if they were pure, notwithstanding they may be defiled by some mixture of impurity. In fact, there is no action so perfect as to be absolutely free from stain; though it may appear more evidently in some than in others. Rachel was influenced by faith, to transfer the right of primogeniture to her son Jacob; a desire, undoubtedly, pious in itself, and a design worthy of praise, anxiously to strive for the fulfilment of the divine promise; but yet we cannot praise the cunning and deceit, by which the whole action would have been vitiated, had not the gratuitous mercy of God interposed. Scripture is full of such instances, which shew that the most excellent actions are sometimes stained with partial sin. But we need not wonder that God in his mercy should pardon such defects, which would otherwise defile almost every virtuous deed; and should honour with reward those works which are unworthy of praise, or even favour. Thus, though these women were too pusillanimous and timid in their answers, yet because they had acted in reality with heartiness and courage, God endured in them the sin which he would have deservedly condemned. This doctrine gives us

of the "mendacium officiosum," he says, "non tam usitatum est in ecclesiasticis libris vocabulum officii."

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alacrity in our desire to do rightly, since God so graciously pardons our infirmities; and, at the same time, it warns us most carefully to be on our guard, lest, when we are desirous of doing well, some sin should creep in to obscure, and thus to contaminate our good work; since it not unfrequently happens that those whose aim is right, halt or stumble or wander in the way to it. In fine, whosoever honestly examines himself, will find some defect even in his best endeavours. Moreover, by the rewards of God, let us be encouraged to the confidence of thus obtaining good success, lest we should faint at the dangers we incur by the faithful performance of our duty; and assuredly no danger will alarm us, if this thought be deeply impressed upon our hearts, that whatever ill-will our good deeds may beget in this world, still God sits in heaven to reward them.

21. *He made them houses.*[1] It is not at all my opinion that this should be expounded as referring to the women, and I am surprised that many interpreters have been grossly mistaken on so clear a point. All are agreed that the pronoun is masculine, and therefore, according to ordinary usage, should refer to males; but because the two letters ם and ן are sometimes used interchangeably, they have supposed that the two clauses of the verse must be connected, and both referred to the women. But there is no need of this, since the sentence runs very well in this way:—"The people multiplied and waxed very mighty, and it came to pass, be-

[1] The accuracy of Calvin's criticism is undeniable, namely,—that as the Hebrew pronoun is of the masculine form, ordinary usage would forbid our considering this clause to be spoken of the midwives; and yet that the masculine and feminine pronominal affixes, distinguished respectively by a final ם or ן, are not used with such inflexible regularity as to preclude all debate. In fact, Moses has used the masculine pronoun ם at the end of ver. 17 of the next chapter, where a feminine pronoun should have been expected In the clause under consideration, *V.* has the ambiguous pronoun *eis*, whilst the LXX. has ἐποίησαν ἑαυταῖς, which is a departure from the Heb. text in both words.—*W.*

The glossary in the Geneva Bible is,—"*i.e.*, God increased the families of the Israelites by their means." Lightfoot, Harmony ii. 108, on the contrary, explains the expression, "For which, their piety, God marrieth them to Israelites, for they were Egyptian women, and builded up Israelitish families by them." "Triplex hic difficultas, (says Poole,) i. Quis fecit? ii. Quibus? iii. Quid?" The balance of comments appears to favour Calvin's solution.

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cause the midwives feared God, that God made *them* houses," *i.e.*, the Israelites; as much as to say, that through the piety of these women, they obtained an abundant offspring. And because some saw that a suitable meaning could not be elicited by this false interpretation, they have imagined that, by the inspiration of God, well-fortified houses were built them by the people, where they might be secure from the attacks of their enemies. Nothing can be more puerile than this conceit. But lest readers should puzzle themselves unnecessarily on this not very perplexing point, let us inquire what the Hebrews meant by this expression, "to make houses." When God promises (1 Sam. ii. 35) that he will build for Samuel "a sure house," there is no question that he refers to a stable priesthood. Again, when he declares (2 Sam. vii.) that he will build a house for David; and when a little afterwards we read in David's prayer, (v. 27,) "thou hast revealed to thy servant, saying, I will build thee a house," the royal dignity is clearly to be understood. It is plain, too, from the address of Abigail, that this was a common mode of speaking, where she says, (1 Sam. xxv. 28,) "the Lord will certainly make my lord a sure house." Now, it is quite unsuitable to the female sex and name that a woman should be made head of a family. Whence it appears that the words are forcibly[1] wrested if we say that God made a house for the midwives; but it will be most applicable to the whole people, that it was multiplied by God, until it arose like a perfect building to its full height. The conclusion is, that the Israelites owed to the exertions of two women the fact, not only that they survived and were preserved, but also that they flourished more and more, in order that thus the glory of God might shine forth with greater brightness, since he so marvellously preserved his people when very near destruction by these weak instruments. But Moses puts the word "houses" in the plural number, because the people were built up by the increase of the offspring of separate families.

22. *And Pharaoh charged.* If he had not been transported with wrath and struck with blindness, he would have seen

[1] "Tire par les cheveux;" dragged by the hair.—*Fr.*

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that the hand of God was against him; but when the reprobate are driven to madness by God, they persevere obstinately in their crimes; and not only so, but, like the deranged[1] or frantic, they dash themselves with greater audacity against every obstacle. It is indeed commonly the case that cruelty, having once tasted innocent blood, becomes more thirsty for it; nay, in general, wicked men, as if excited by their course, grow hotter and hotter in crime, so that there is no end nor measure to their iniquity; but here, in this very desperate rage, we must perceive the vengeance of God, when he had given up the tyrant for the devil to destroy him, whilst we also remember his design both to try the patience of his people as well as to set forth his own goodness and power. The tyrant, finding that his snares and deceit availed nothing, now shakes off fear and flies to open violence, commanding the little ones to be torn from the breasts of their mothers and to be cast into the river. Lest there should be any lack of executioners, he gives this charge to all the Egyptians, whom he knew to be more than ready for the work. He spares the daughters, that, being enslaved and allotted to the Egyptians, they might produce slaves for their masters, whilst by them the races and names could not be preserved. Here it may be worth while to meditate on a comparison with our own times. Antichrist, with all his murderous agents, leaves in peace those who by their treacherous silence deny Christ, and are prepared to embrace as slaves every kind of impiety; neither does he exercise his cruelty, insatiable though it be, where he sees no manliness to exist; and he exults and triumphs, as if his end was gained, when he perceives any who had some courage in professing their faith fallen into effeminacy and cowardice. But how much better is it for us to die an hundred times, retaining our manly firmness in death, than to redeem our life for the base service of the devil.

[1] "Vertiginosi, vel phrenetici."—*Lat.* "Phrenetiques, ou demoniacles."—*Fr.*

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CHAPTER II.

1. And there went a man of the house of Levi, and took *to wife* a daughter of Levi.

2. And the woman conceived, and bare a son: and when she saw him that he *was a* goodly *child*, she hid him three months.

3. And when she could not longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein; and she laid *it* in the flags by the river's brink.

4. And his sister stood afar off, to wit what would be done to him.

5. And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash *herself* at the river; and her maidens walked along by the river's side: and when she saw the ark among the flags, she sent her maid to fetch it.

6. And when she had opened *it*, she saw the child: and, behold, the babe wept. And she had compassion on him, and said, This *is one* of the Hebrews' children.

7. Then said his sister to Pharaoh's daughter, Shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee?

8. And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, Go. And the maid went and called the child's mother.

9. And Pharaoh's daughter said unto her, Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give *thee* thy wages. And the woman took the child, and nursed it.

10. And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses: and she said, Because I drew him out of the water.

1. Abierat autem vir ex domo Levi, et acceperat filiam Levi.

2. Concepit autem mulier illa, et peperit filium; vidensque eum esse pulchrum, abscondit tribus mensibus.

3. Et quia illum abscondere amplius non poterat, accepit ei arcam arundineam, et oblevit eam bitumine et pice, et reposuit in ea infantulum: exposuitque in carecto, juxta ripam fluminis.

4. Stetit vero soror ejus eminus, ut cognosceret quid ei fieret.

5. Porro descendit filia Pharaonis ut lavaret se in flumine: (deambulabant autem puellæ ejus secus ripam fluminis:) et videns arculam in medio carecti, misit ancillam suam quæ illam tolleret.

6. Quumque aperuisset, vidit ipsum infantulum: et ecce, puer flebat: et miserta illius dixit, Hic ex pueris Hebræorum est.

7. Tunc dixit soror ejus ad filiam Pharaonis, Ibone ut vocem tibi mulierem nutricem ex Hebræis quæ tibi lactet infantulum?

8. Respondit ei filia Pharaonis, Vade. Profecta est igitur puella, et vocavit matrem pueri.

9. Cui filia Pharaonis dixit, Tolle infantulum hunc, et lacta eum mihi, et ego dabo tibi mercedem. Tunc accepit mulier infantulum, et lactavit eum.

10. Crevit autem infantulus, et adduxit eum ad filiam Pharaonis, cui factus in filium, et vocavit nomen ejus Moseh, dicens, Quoniam ex aquis extraxi eum.

1. *And there went.* I have preferred rendering the verb in the pluperfect tense (abierat, "there had gone") to prevent all ambiguity; for unless we say that Miriam and Aaron were the children of another mother, it would not be

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probable otherwise that this marriage was contracted after the passing of the edict. Aaron was three years old when Moses was born; and we may easily conjecture that he was brought up openly and securely. But there is no doubt but that the cruelty was greatest at its commencement. Therefore, if they were uterine brothers, there is no other explanation except to say that, by the figure called ὕστερον πρότερον, he now relates what had happened before. But mention is only made of Moses, because it then first began to be criminal to breed up male infants. The Hebrews use the word for going or departing, to signify the undertaking of any serious or momentous matter, or when they put any proposal into operation. Nor is it superfluous for Moses to say that his father married a wife of his own tribe, because this double tie of kindred should have confirmed them in their attempt to preserve their offspring. But soon afterwards we shall see how timidly they acted. They hide the child for a short time, rather from the transient impulse of love than from firm affection. When three months had elapsed, and that impulse had passed away, they almost abandon the child, in order to escape from danger. For although the mother would have probably come next day, if he had passed the night there, to give him the breast, yet had she exposed him as an outcast to innumerable risks. By this example, we perceive what terror had taken possession of every mind, when a man and his wife, united to each other by close natural relationship, prefer exposing their common offspring, whose beauty moved them to pity, to peril of wild beasts, of the atmosphere, of the water, and of every kind, rather than that they should perish with him. But on this point different opinions are maintained: whether or not it would have been better to discharge themselves of the care of their child, or to await whatever danger attended its secret preservation. I confess, indeed, that whilst it is difficult in such perplexities to come to a right conclusion, so also our conclusions are apt to be variously judged; still I affirm that the timidity of the parents of Moses, by which they were induced to forget their duty, cannot advisedly be excused.

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We see that God has implanted even in wild and brute beasts so great instinctive anxiety for the protection and cherishing of their young, that the dam often despises her own life in their defence. Wherefore it is the more base, that men, created in the divine image, should be driven by fear to such a pitch of inhumanity as to desert the children who are intrusted to their fidelity and protection. The reply of those who assert that there was no better course in their desperate circumstances than to repose on the providence of God, has something in it, but is not complete. It is the chief consolation of believers to cast their cares on the bosom of God; provided that, in the meantime, they perform their own duties, overpass not the bounds of their vocation, and turn not away from the path set before them; but it is a perversion to make the providence of God an excuse for negligence and sloth. The parents of Moses ought rather to have looked forward with hope that God would be the safeguard of themselves and their child. His mother made the ark with great pains, and daubed it; but for what purpose? Was it not to bury her child in it? I allow that she always seemed anxious for him, yet in such a way that her proceedings would have been ridiculous and ineffectual, unless God had unexpectedly appeared from heaven as the author of their preservation, of which she herself despaired. Nevertheless, we must not judge either the father or mother as if they had lived in quiet times; for it is easy to conceive with what bitter grief they compassed the death of their child; nay, to speak more correctly, we can scarcely conceive what terrible agonies they suffered. Therefore, when Moses relates how his mother made and prepared an ark, he hints that the father was so overwhelmed with sorrow as to be incapable of doing anything. Thus the power of the Lord more clearly manifested itself, when the mother, her husband being entirely disheartened, took the whole burden on herself. For, if they had acted in concert, Moses would not have assigned the whole praise to his mother. The Apostle, indeed, (Heb. xi. 23,) gives a share of the praise to the husband, and not undeservedly, since it is probable that the child was not hidden without his cognizance and approval.

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But God, who generally "chooses the weak things of the world," strengthened with the power of his Spirit a woman rather than a man, to stand foremost in the matter. And the same reasoning applies to his sister, into whose hands his mother resigned the last and most important act, so that while Miriam, who, on account of her tender age, appeared to be exempt from danger, is appointed to watch over her brother's life, both parents appear to have neglected their duty.

2. *And when she saw that he was a goodly child.* There is no doubt but that God had adorned him with this beauty, in order the more to influence his parents to preserve him; as it sometimes happens that, when God sees his people slow in the performance of their duty, he spurs on their inactivity by allurements; although it appears from the testimony of the Apostle, that this was not their only motive to have pity on him, but that it was the prop, as it were, of their weak faith; for he tells us (Heb. xi. 23) that "*by faith* Moses was hid three months of his parents." If any object that faith and regard for beauty are things not only very different but almost contrary to each other, I reply, that by the wonderful compassion of God, it comes to pass that the very impediment which might darken faith becomes its assistant, though it ought indeed to rest upon the promises alone. Therefore, if faith had shone purely and brightly in their hearts, they would have cared nothing for his beauty; on the other hand, unless the promise had had its power, nay, unless it had occupied the first place, there was no such efficacy in the goodliness of his appearance as would have led them willingly to hazard their lives. We conclude, then, that, since they had good hopes of the deliverance promised to them, their courage was increased by the additional motive of his beauty, and that they were so attracted to pity, that all obstacles were overcome. Thus does God ordinarily work, leading his people in their darkness like the blind, when they are wavering through ignorance and weakness of heart. In fine, the love which his beauty awakened was so far from being a part of faith, that it deservedly detracts from its praise; but God, who, in his wonderful wisdom, makes all things to work for

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the good of his chosen ones, sustained and strengthened their tottering faith by this support.

4. *And his sister stood afar off.* It is probable that this was Miriam.[1] By the fact of her standing to watch what became of him, it appears that his parents had some hope remaining, though it was but small. For it is scarcely doubtful but that whatever Egyptian had come that way would have been his executioner, as well from the command of the king as from the general hatred of the nation against the Hebrews. It seems, then, that Miriam was set by her parents to watch, rather to witness her brother's murder, than to provide for the safety of the child. But, since we have just seen that, in the darkness of sorrow and despair, some sparks of faith still survived, the mother, exposing her little one on the river's side, did not abandon all care of him, but desired to commend him to the mercy of any passer-by, and therefore stationed her daughter afar off to act as circumstances arose. For, if she had heard that the child still lay there at night, she would have come secretly to give him the breast. This determination, however, as is often the case in times of perplexity and trouble, was vain, though God miraculously stretched forth his hand for the child's preservation. For there can be no question but that his secret providence brought the king's daughter to the river, who had the courage to take up the child and to have it nursed; and that he, too, influenced her mind to the kind act of saving its life,—in a word, that he controlled the whole matter. Indeed, all pious persons will confess that he was the author of her great and uninquisitive kindness in not taking more pains to learn who were the child's parents, and why a nurse offered herself so immediately, which circumstance might have naturally awakened suspicion. Thus it did not happen without many miracles that the child escaped safely from the ark. Scoffers would say that all occurred accidentally; because perverse delusion has possession of their minds, so that they are blind to the manifest works of God, and think that the human race is governed by mere chance.

[1] "De laquelle il sera ci après parlé plus à plein;" who will presently be more fully spoken of.—*Fr.*

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But we must hold fast to the principle, that whilst God rules all men by his providence, he honours his elect with his peculiar care, and is watchful for their deliverance and support; and if we carefully weigh all the circumstances, reason will easily assure us that all things which led to the preservation of Moses, were disposed by his guidance, and under his auspices, and by the secret inspiration of his Spirit. For to ascribe to fortune such an harmonious combination of various and manifold means, is no less absurd than to imagine with Epicurus that the world was created by the fortuitous conjunction of atoms.[1] Assuredly he drew out Moses, who was to be the future redeemer of his people, as from the grave, in order that he might prove that the beginning of the safety of his Church was like a creation out of nothing. And this was the crowning act of his divine mercy, not only that he was given to his mother to be nursed, but that she received wages for it.

10. *And the child grew.* Here, however, their grief is renewed, when his parents are again obliged to give up Moses, and he is torn as it were from their bowels. For, on this condition, he passed over to the Egyptian nation, not only that he should be alienated from his own race, but that he should increase the number of their enemies in his own person. And certainly it is scarcely credible that he could be long tolerated in the tyrant's court, and amongst the most cruel enemies of Israel, unless he professed to be a partaker of their hatred. We know of what corrupting influences courts are full; it is well known, too, how great was the pride of the Egyptians, whilst experience teaches us how prone even the best natures are to yield to the temptations of pleasure, wherefore we must wonder the more that, when Moses was engulfed in these whirlpools, he still retained his uprightness and integrity. Certainly the hope of their redemption might seem here again to suffer an eclipse, the course of circumstances being all against it; but thus the providence of God, the more circuitously it appears to flow,

[1] "De ce qui apparoist en l'air comme poussiere, quand le soleil luist, sans que Dieu s'en soit meslé;" of that which appears in the air, like dust, when the sun shines, without the interposition of God.—*Fr.*

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shines forth all the more wonderfully in the end, since it never really wanders from its direct object, or fails of its effect, when its due time is come. Nevertheless God, as with an outstretched hand, drew back his servant to himself and to the body of his Church, by suggesting in his name the recollection of his origin; for the king's daughter did not give him this name without the preventing Spirit of God, that Moses might know that he was drawn out of the river when he was about to perish. As often, then, as he heard his name, he must needs remember of what people he sprang; and the power of this stimulus must have been all the greater, because the fact was known to everybody. The daughter of the king, indeed, could have by no means intended this, and would have rather wished the memory of his origin to be lost; but God, who put words in the mouth of Balaam's ass, influenced also the tongue of this woman to bear loud and public testimony to the very thing which she would have preferred to conceal; and although she desired to keep Moses with herself, became his directress and guide in returning to his own nation. But should any be surprised that she did not fear her father's anger in thus publicly recording the violation of his command, it may readily be replied that there was no cause of offence given to the tyrant, who would have willingly allowed any number of slaves to be born to him, so that the name of Israel were abolished. For why did he spare the lives of the female infants, but in order that Egyptian slaves might be born of them? And, regarding Moses in this light, he did not conceive that the act of his daughter had violated his command, nay, he rather rejoiced that the Israelitish nation was thus diminished, and the Egyptian nation numerically increased. One question only remains, viz., how it occurred to the mind of Pharaoh's daughter to give Moses an Hebrew name,[1] when it is certain from Ps. lxxxi. 5, that there was a great difference between the two languages: "he went out through the land of Egypt, where I heard a language that I understood not?"

[1] Calvin seems altogether to ignore the opinion of Philo, Clemens Alex., &c., that Moses was an Egyptian name, from Mo, or Moys, *water*, and Is, or Ises, or Hyse, *preserved*.

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And again, we know that Joseph made use of an interpreter with his brethren when he pretended to be an Egyptian. (Gen. xlii. 23.) We may probably conjecture that she asked the mother of Moses the word which expressed this signification, or we may prefer supposing that he had an Egyptian name, which was interpreted by his Hebrew one, and this I am most inclined to think was the case. When Moses subsequently fled, he again took the name his mother gave him.

11. And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens: and he spied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren.

12. And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that *there was* no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand.

13. And when he went out the second day, behold, two men of the Hebrews strove together: and he said to him that did the wrong, Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow?

14. And he said, Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? Intendest thou to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian? and Moses feared, and said, Surely this thing is known.

15. Now when Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to slay Moses. But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Midian: and he sat down by a well.

11. Factum autem est diebus illis, quum adolevisset Moses, ut egrederetur ad fratres suos, et vidit onera ipsorum, viditque virum Ægyptium percutientem quendam Hebræum ex fratribus suis.

12. Tunc respexit huc et illuc, et videns quod nemo adesset, percussit Ægyptium, atque abscondit in arena.

13. Et quum egressus esset postridie, ecce, duo viri Hebræi rixabantur: tunc dixit malefico, Quare percutis propinquum tuum?

14. Qui respondit, Quis te constituit principem, et judicem super nos? an ut me occidas tu loqueris, sicut occidisti Ægyptium? Itaque timuit Moses, ac dixit, Certe innotuit hæc res.

15. Pharao etiam audito hoc sermone, quærebat interficere Mosen. Et fugiens Moses à facie Pharaonis mansit in Madian, seditque juxta puteum.

11. *And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown.* Now did that faith which the Apostle celebrates begin to shew itself, when Moses, despising the pleasures and riches of the Court, chose rather to suffer the reproach of Christ, than to be accounted happy apart from companionship with the chosen people. Nor was it only love for his nation, but faith in the promises, which induced him to undertake this charge, by which he knew that he should incur the hatred of all the Egyptians. For although he did not immediately resign his wealth, and honourable station, and influence, and power, this was, as it were, the prepara-

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tion for divesting himself of all these deceitful allurements. Whence the Apostle says, "he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter." (Heb. xi. 24.) There is certainly no doubt but that he avowed his desire to return to his true and natural kindred, from whom he had been separated: for we gather from the context, that he did not come to see his brethren only to pity their estate, but to bring them some consolation, and even to share their lot. Nor was the Court so near that he could daily visit them in his ordinary walk. And it is said that "he went out the second day." Therefore, he privately withdrew himself from the Court, or, having asked permission, preferred to expose himself to enmity, rather than not discover his affectionate regard to his people. But he relates that he looked on their burdens, or troubles, so that their unjust oppression must have naturally aroused him to give them help. He adds, too, another motive, that he "saw an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew." It is probable that they were harshly treated by their taskmasters if they were slow in their work, and since they were given over to the will of wicked men, that every one might exercise the same cruelty upon them with impunity.

12. *And he looked this way and that way.* Hence it more evidently appears that Moses came with the design of succouring his unhappy brethren, and of relieving and aiding them with his help, since, by killing the Egyptian, he avenged the injury done indeed to an individual, but having a bearing on the whole nation. But although he was inspired by the Holy Spirit with special courage for the performance of this act, still it was accompanied with an infirmity, which shews that he did not undertake without hesitation what he yet knew to be his vocation. For Stephen (Acts vii. 25) bears witness that Moses was not impelled by a rash zeal to slay the Egyptian, but because he knew that he was divinely appointed to be the avenger and deliverer of his nation. Still he looked about to see whether any one saw him, and dared not punish the wrong-doer, except by a secret blow. Thus we perceive that he was not altogether so bold as he should have been, and that he had to strive against his timidity. Again, we gather from his hesitation that his

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faith was weak, so that we must not suppose that it was thus praised by the Apostle because it was absolutely perfect. In the first place, then, let us conclude that Moses did not rashly have recourse to the sword, but that he was armed by God's command, and, conscious of his legitimate vocation, rightly and judiciously assumed that character which God assigned to him. Thence it follows, that private persons would act improperly, and would be by no means countenanced by his example, if they sought to repress wrong by force and arms. Thus far we should imitate Moses in rendering aid to the suffering and oppressed, as far as our means go, and in caring not to incur the ill-will of the wicked, when we oppose ourselves to their oppressions; but we must leave it to the judges, who are invested with public authority, to draw the sword of vengeance. If these do not afford their aid to the innocent when they are unjustly treated, all we can do is to murmur; as not even Moses would have been allowed to proceed further, unless he had been the appointed avenger and deliverer of the people. As to the fear, by which he betrayed his pusillanimity and his present unpreparedness for fulfilling his office, let us learn that the obedience of the saints, which is stained by sin, is still sometimes acceptable with God through merey; and therefore, although the weakness of the flesh is a drawback to us in the performance of our duty, still let us cease not to struggle against it; for our assurance of this ought to have no small effect in animating us, when we are persuaded that there is pardon ready for our hesitation, if we do not yield to it.

13. *Behold, two men of the Hebrews.* This perseverance shews that Moses was firm and determined in his design of returning to his brethren, and abandoning the Court; and that he had advisedly renounced its splendour, its wealth, and comforts, although he was by no means ignorant of the miseries to which he exposed himself, and how painful and disagreeable, nay, how ignominious a condition awaited him. Wherefore we need not wonder if the Apostle says, that he chose "rather to endure the reproach of Christ," "and to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the

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pleasures of sin for a season." (Heb. xi. 25, 26.) Besides, the sad sight of the tyrant's violence and of the burdens by which his brethren were oppressed, was anything but an obstacle to his proceeding, because, being prepared by the hope of future recompense to bear the cross, he was superior to present fear. But he does not assume, as before, the character of a judge; but performs a duty, which the law of charity demands of every one, addressing the men who strove together as a peace-maker, and exhorting them both to be reconciled, though he especially blames the wrong-doer. This was not peculiar to Moses, but the common duty of all believers, when the innocent are harshly treated, to take their part, and as far as possible to interpose, lest the stronger should prevail. It can scarcely be done without exasperating those who are disposed to evil; but nothing ought to allow us to be silent, while justice is violated by their frowardness. For in this case, silence is a kind of consent. Yet Moses reproves moderately, and in kind terms, the man who had assaulted his brother; because he does not so much wish to reproach him with the greatness of his fault, as to find the means of calming his ferocity.

14. *Who made thee a prince?* No wonder if the headstrong and wicked man repels angrily this mild admonition; for thus are those, who are disposed to injustice, accustomed to rage as soon as they are reproved, and to drive away good advisers with contumely. And certainly it is an uncommon virtue to acknowledge our faults, and patiently to submit to correction. For in proportion to a man's evil disposition, and to the greatness of his offence, is his rage under admonition, and his violence in altercation; wherefore, whoever undertakes to restrain the wicked must expect to meet with these indignities. Still, we may understand from the petulance of this individual how perverse were the minds of the whole nation. On this account Stephen says that Moses was refused by his own nation, and accuses them all of ingratitude. (Acts vii. 35.) But, without being too hard on this people, we learn from this example how rude is the nature of those whom God has not tamed; for their perverseness as firmly repels correction, as an anvil repels the blow

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of a hammer. When, therefore, they are so stubborn that though ten times reproved they are still hardened, no wonder if God deals with them more roughly, as he declares he will do by the mouth of David. (Ps. xviii. 27.) Lest we should experience this, let us submit to his rod in time; and since this is not given to all, let us entreat him to make us truly teachable. For what shall we gain by kicking against the pricks? Moreover, a kind of brutal fierceness accompanies this perverseness, as is again seen in this instance. The vile and abject slave asks Moses, Who made him a judge over the Hebrews? as if he, and all his race, were not exposed to universal contumely. If the lowest of the Egyptian rabble had struck him a blow, he would not have dared to murmur; yet he rages as imperiously against this mild admonition, as if he were free from all subjection. What follows is even worse, "Intendest thou to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian?" He ought to have received Moses as if he had been an angel of God, on account of such a proof of his zeal and piety; but, turning the benefit into an accusation, he not only hatefully taunts him with what it would have been just to praise, but even threatens him. Meantime, we cannot doubt but that the holy man must have been racked by a sore temptation, when he finds such barbarity in his nation. He knew, indeed, that the Egyptians would have been his professed enemies, if the matter had got abroad; but he never could have expected such an unworthy return from his brethren, whose misery he desired to relieve; and therefore it was a proof of incredible strength of purpose to surmount such an obstacle.

15. *Now when Pharaoh heard.* Moses acknowledges his fear, though it was not sufficient to withdraw him from the work to which he was called. We said before, that his zeal was mingled with infirmity, but yet prevailed; so that he performed the duty entrusted to him manfully, yet at the same time timidly. But this is another proof of his firmness, that he is not ashamed of what he had done, so as to endeavour to appease the king, but he betakes himself to exile; nor is he so alarmed in this critical time as to sink down in helplessness or despair, but he departs into the

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land of Midian, and prefers wandering in the Desert, to a reconciliation with the enemies of the chosen people. But although God appears by this circuitous course to decline from his purpose of delivering them, yet he marvellously carries on His work. We have already sufficiently perceived that Moses was certainly not yet ripe for the arduous contests which awaited him; that, having been brought up delicately and luxuriously in the Court, he was not yet accustomed to the great and continual anxieties of which the sequel of the history will shew him the conqueror. Therefore God in a manner withdrew him, that he might gradually render him fit and equal to undertake so difficult a task. For the experience of forty years in such a laborious and ascetic mode of life, did not a little avail to prepare him for enduring any hardships; so that the Desert may well be called the school in which he was taught, until he was invited to his more difficult charge. As to his "sitting down by a well," I interpret it, that he sat down there to rest from his fatigue about sunset, that he might ask for hospitality from the people, who he hoped would come at eventide to draw water. From this unprosperous beginning he might conjecture what an uncomfortable reception he had to expect.

16. Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters: and they came and drew *water*, and filled the troughs to water their father's flock.

17. And the shepherds came and drove them away: but Moses stood up and helped them, and watered their flock.

18. And when they came to Reuel their father, he said, How *is it that* ye are come so soon to-day?

19. And they said, An Egyptian delivered us out of the hand of the shepherds, and also drew *water* enough for us, and watered the flock.

20. And he said unto his daughters, And where *is* he? why *is* it *that* ye have left the man? call him, that he may eat bread.

21. And Moses was content to dwell with the man: and he gave Moses Zipporah his daughter.

16. Erant autem sacerdoti Madian septem filiæ, quæ venerunt, et hauserunt, impleveruntque canales, ut potarent oves patris sui.

17. Et venerunt pastores qui repulerunt eas: et surgens Moses auxiliatus est ipsis, potavitque oves illarum.

18. Et quum venissent ad Bethuel patrem suum, dixit ille, Quare hodie tam cito rediistis?

19. Responderunt, vir Ægyptius liberavit nos e manu pastorum, atque etiam hauriendo hausit nobis, et præbuit potum ovibus.

20. Dixit ille ad filias suas, Et ubi est ille? quare sic dereliquistis virum? convocate eum ut comedat panem.

21. Et consensit Moses habitare cum viro illo, qui dedit Sephoram filiam suam Mosi.

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22. And she bare *him* a son, and he called his name Gershom: for he said, I have been a stranger in a strange land.

22. Quæ quum peperisset filium, vocavit nomen ejus Gerson, dicens, Peregrinus sum in terra aliena.

16. *Now the priest of Midian.* The profane would attribute this meeting to good fortune, whereas God affords us in it a striking picture of his providence, in thus with an outstretched hand directing the steps of his servant. Those damsels were in the habit of coming daily to the well; and Moses sat down to ask for hospitality at the waterside, whither in a dry country the inhabitants were likely to flock in the evening. But it was by no means due to chance that he came so opportunely to render assistance to the damsels, and that Jethro so hospitably invited him; but God was the guide of his wandering servant's way, not only to obtain for him a resting-place for a day, but a comfortable habitation even to the close of his exile. For Jethro (whose title shews that he was of some dignity amongst his people) not only engaged his services, but chose him for his son-in-law. Although the occupation of a shepherd was a humble one, yet there was no little consolation in this high connection. All are not agreed about the word כֹּהֵן, *cohen*.[1] The Chaldee paraphrast badly translates it "Prince," because it does not accord with the fact that the shepherds of the country were at variance with his daughters. Nor is it more probable that a rich and chief man would have been without servants, so as to be obliged to expose his daughters daily to the insults and quarrels of the shepherds. I think, then, that he was a priest (*sacrificum,*) which is the opinion most generally received. But the question is, whether he worshipped false gods, or the one true God? and certainly many probable reasons lead us to conclude, that he did not sacrifice to idols; because Moses could scarcely have been persuaded, not merely to live in a house which was defiled by foul unrighteousness, but even to marry into it. Besides, hereafter,

[1] כהן. This verb does not occur in Hebrew in its primary conjugation (kal), but is found in Arabic, where it signifies to draw nigh. Hence the noun, being of the form of the present participle, means in strictness one who draws nigh; and in usage a priest who draws nigh to God; a prince who draws nigh to the sovereign; or, sometimes the sovereign's guards, ministers, or near kinsmen.

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many indications of piety will appear in the language of Jethro. Although, as almost the whole world had then fallen into many corrupt practices, it seems likely to me that his priesthood was in some measure corrupted. In the time of Abraham, Melchizedek was the only priest of the living God. Abraham himself was extricated from a deep abyss of idolatry into which his family was plunged. It was, then, hardly possible that the Midianites should have retained the pure worship; and indeed it is plain from other passages, that they were joined to idols. After duly weighing all these points, nothing occurs to me as more probable, than that under the priesthood of Jethro the true God was worshipped, according as tradition had revealed Him, but not purely; because religion was at that time everywhere contaminated by diverse superstitions. But there is some difference between idolatry and the impure worship of God, corrupted in some respects. I say, then, that they were worshippers of the true God, because they had not entirely departed from the principles of His religion, although they had contracted some defilement from the stinking puddles of error which had gradually crept in. There is also another question among interpreters as to the name "Jethro." Those who think *Bethuel*[1] was a different person from Jethro, are easily refuted; for it is quite evident, that Moses in the next chapter speaks of the same person, though under another name. Nor would it agree with the mention of his marriage, that the name of the father should be altogether omitted; and it is a forced construction to suppose, that in such immediate connection two persons should be spoken of as in the same degree of relationship. Again, if Jethro was the son of *Bethuel*, living in the same house, he would have been a member of the family, but not its head, and therefore Moses would not be said to have fed *his* flock. Besides, it is probable that Hobab (who will be afterwards called the son of *Bethuel*, Num. x. 29) was the brother-in-law of Moses, *i.e.*, the brother of his wife; from whence we collect, that Jethro, as is not unusual, had two names. For it is absurd to think that it is Hobab whom Moses here calls Jethro, and an un-

[1] See note on ver. 18. In the French version he is always called *Raguel*.

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reasonable invention. We shall hereafter see that Jethro came into the Desert to congratulate Moses; but it is related in the same place that he "let him depart;" and certainly it would not have been kind to press a man bowed down by age to accompany him on his long journey. For if he was older than Moses, he was scarcely less than ninety; and what sense would there have been in promising a decrepit old man the reward of his labour, after they should reach the land of Canaan?

But the whole controversy is put an end to in one word; because Moses writes that Jethro returned home, but that Hobab was persuaded to listen to his earnest requests, and to remain with him. Nothing can be more probable than that the old man *Bethuel*, who was unequal to bear the fatigue of a long journey, returned straight home, having left his son behind with Moses, to be to him "instead of eyes," and to guide them on their way.

18. *And when they came to Reuel.*[1] I do not think any blame attaches to the daughters of *Bethuel* for not offering hospitality to Moses, because young women should be modest, and it would have been an act of too great forwardness to invite an unknown foreigner, without acquainting their

[1] In the Latin Geneva editions of 1573 and 1617, this name is printed, through the whole commentary on the chapter, *Bethuel;* but in the commentary on Numbers x. 29, *Reuel;* whilst *A. V.* has *Reuel* here, and *Raguel* in Num. In Hebrew, the name in both cases is Reʕuel; but the Hebrew ʕ having no equivalent in either the Greek, Latin, or English alphabet, its occurrence has occasioned a dissimilar orthography of several proper names in different translations, or sometimes in the same translation, according as the translator happened to substitute for it *a* or *o*, or to omit it altogether. The LXX. seems to have been induced by mere similarity of shape to substitute γ for it in the middle of words, where a consonant seemed desirable.

As to the person here spoken of, the relation of each to Moses is designated by the same word חתן; viz., Jethro in Ex. iii. 1, and xviii.; Hobab in Judges iv. 11; and Reuel (probably) in Numb. x. 29; whilst Zipporah was the same word, rendered *husband* in Ex. iv. 25, 26. The radical verb, in this case also, is one which does not occur in Hebrew in its primary conjugation, but is found in Arabic, where it signifies to *provide a nuptial feast;* and hence the noun came to signify any relative by marriage, though most commonly a *father-in-law*. In Numb. x. 29, and Judges iv. 11, Jerome has rendered it simply kinsman. This being premised, it will appear probable that Reuel was the grandfather, Jethro the father, and Hobab the brother, of Zipporah. Hence, after forty years, Reuel is no more spoken of, except to notice descent from him.—*W.*

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father. But God inspires the heart of their father with gratitude, so that he desires him to be sent for. Moses, therefore, is brought from the well, and finds a home in which he may live comfortably, and is treated with kindness on account of his matrimonial alliance. And certainly there was need of some alleviation for his manifold cares and sorrows; since it was a hard trial, which would not only pain him greatly, but would have altogether overwhelmed him in despair, unless the holy man had been supported in some way in enduring his forty years' exile. We may easily conjecture from our own feelings how great must have been the weariness of so tedious a delay, especially when he saw that the flower of his age was past, and that his strength was failing, so that he would be afterwards but little fitted for activity. It was, therefore, difficult for him to be intent on that vocation, which might seem to be obsolete, and abrogated in this period of forty years. These heavy troubles and anxieties are in some degree mitigated, but yet not so completely as to prevent the recurrence of many opposing thoughts. Wherefore God's grace is more astonishing, which kept him peaceful and calm in the midst of so many cares, so that, in expectation of the unknown time, he should be content with his mean and humble lot, and stand in daily preparation to perform the part of a deliverer. As to the word יואל,[1] *yal*, the Jews themselves are not agreed: many think that it merely expresses consent; others take it to mean "to swear." And perhaps *Bethuel* was unwilling to give his daughter to an unknown guest, unless he bound himself by an oath to live there, as otherwise it might be feared that Moses might take away his wife elsewhere. Thus the marriage-vow was a promise to remain. Thence we see the integrity of that age, that the sanction of an oath, through reverence to the

[1] יואל, *A. V., was content. C.* states the question about the meaning of this word nearly as he found it stated in *S. M.*; who had said, "Radix verbi יאל idem significat quod רצה, voluit, complacuit, consensit. Sunt tamen inter Hebræos qui etiam אלה et נשבע, id est juravit, exponunt." They who would interpret it *he sware*, must suppose יואל to be irregularly formed out of the verb אלה; whilst there is no irregularity of formation assumed by those who accept it as a part of the verb יאל, and consequently translate it *consented*, or *was content*.—*W.*

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name of God, was so strong, that both were contented with this bond.

22. *He called his name Gershom.* I do not approve of their view who think this was a name of congratulation to alleviate the pain of banishment, but rather imagine that Moses gave this name to his son, as well to remind himself as his father-in-law and his wife, that he sought a country elsewhere, and that there he was but a sojourner. Nor is there any objection in his promise to his father-in-law to remain, because he did not so bind himself as to shake off or break the yoke of his divine vocation. It was only a provision to this effect, that Moses should not lightly forsake the home where he was so kindly welcomed. It is not credible that he was silent as to the cause of his exile: in the first place, to avert the suspicion of wrong-doing, and in witness of his innocence; and secondly, that he might proclaim the peculiar favour with which God had honoured the people of Israel. Wherefore, in the name of his son, he would set before himself an unceasing memorial, by which he might be kept alive to the hope of redemption; for he declares that land, in which he had found apparently a peaceful resting-place, and a pleasant home, to be "strange" to him. Nor does he compare Midian with Egypt, for he was but a sojourner in either land; but wherever he may dwell, he declares himself a stranger, until he should obtain the inheritance which God has promised. And, indeed, it would have been absurd to call that land, where he had found a settled home, a foreign land, in reference to Egypt, especially since the Apostle bears testimony that he had left that land under the influence of faith. (Heb. xi. 27.) In fine, we see that he sought for a means of cherishing and at the same time of testifying his faith, when he professed that he was a sojourner in a foreign land.

23. And it came to pass in process of time, that the king of Egypt died: and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried; and their cry came up unto God, by reason of the bondage.

23. Accidit autem diebus illis multis, mortuus est rex Ægypti: et suspiraverunt filii Israel propter opus, et vociferati sunt: ascenditque clamor eorum, ad Deum propter opus.[1]

[1] *Vel*, a servitute.

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24. And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.

24. Et audivit Deus clamorem eorum, recordatusque est Deus pacti sui cum Abraham, Isaac, et Jacob.

25. And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto *them*.

25. Viditque Deus filios Israel, et cognovit Deus.

23. *And it came to pass in process of time.* [1]He uses the demonstrative pronoun to mark the forty years in which God kept his servant in suspense, as if he had forsaken him. By adding "many," he expresses the approaching end of the interval. When, therefore, he had reached his eightieth year, and had married and grown old in the land of Midian, the intolerable cruelty of their tyrannical masters extorted new sighings and cries from the children of Israel; not that they began then first to grieve and lament, but because they became more alive to their woes, and their duration made them to be felt more acutely. We know that the hope of a happier issue is soothing to our woes; and the hope that some one more kind would succeed the dead tyrant, in some measure softened the misery of the afflicted people. But when the change of kings in no wise lightened their oppression, their sorrow was increased, and forced them to cry out more loudly than before. Thus, then, I understand the words of Moses, that when the tyrant was dead, the children of Israel were not treated more humanely, and therefore cried out more vehemently. Although it is not likely, I think, that the Pharaoh who had at first afflicted them with burdens and taxes, and had commanded their children to be killed, lived till this time; because in that case he would have reigned more than eighty years, which is not usual. Before the birth of Moses, the Israelites had already been sorely oppressed for many years. Nor had (the king) proceeded at once to so great an atrocity as to command all the males to be killed; but when he found that his cruel edicts availed nothing, he advanced to this extremity. From the birth of Moses until the time here spoken of, about eighty years had passed; and hence we may suppose that, before their deliverance drew near, there had been one or more successive kings. When these various changes of circumstances

[1] The Commentary here refers to Calvin's Latin Translation.

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left the condition of the people unchanged, or even made it worse, extreme necessity drew forth this unwonted lamentation, and despair itself drove them to pray, not that there had been an entire neglect of supplication to God before, but because they looked also in other directions, until all earthly means being entirely cut off, they were forcibly drawn to seek in earnest for help from above. From this example we learn that, although the pressure of our tribulations weighs us down with sorrow and pain, yet that our prayers are not straightway directed to God, and that much is required to stimulate our sluggish hearts. Moses also infers that it was no wonder if God's assistance was not earlier afforded, since the children of Israel were stupified in their misery. Let this example, then, teach us to flee to God at once, in order that he may make haste to bestow his grace.

And their cry came up. Moses magnifies the mercy of God by this circumstance, that he took not vengeance on their slowness, as it deserved, but graciously inclined to their tardy cries. In fact, we may observe in this history what is described in Psalm cvi., that the most stubborn and hard-hearted in their extremity turn their prayers at length to God, rather from the exceeding greatness of their trouble than from the well-regulated exercise of faith. He says, "by reason of the bondage;" because it is the attribute of God to succour the oppressed, to deliver the captives, and to raise up them that are brought low; and this office he constantly performs. As to what is added, that "God remembered his covenant," it is the explanation of the cause why he heard their groaning, viz., that he might ratify his gratuitous promise made to Abraham and his descendants. He expressly mentions the three patriarchs, because God lodged his covenant with them, that it might continue firm for perpetual generations. And, indeed, since God is inclined towards us to help us of his own free mercy, so he offers himself, and invites us voluntarily; and therefore confidence in prayer must only be sought for in his promises. Thus the *copula* here should be resolved into the *illative particle*, that "God heard their groaning, *because* he remembered his covenant." How far remembrance is possible with God, we

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must learn from its contrary. God is said to forget when he does not really and openly appear, and stretch forth his hand to help; therefore, when we say he "remembers," we mark our *apprehension* of his aid; and both expressions have relation to effect. In the same way he is said "to behold," and its opposite, "to turn his back," because we then *perceive* that he beholds us when he actually succours us.

CHAPTER THIRD.

1. Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the back-side of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, *even* to Horeb.

2. And the Angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush; and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush *was* not consumed.

3. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.

4. And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here *am* I.

5. And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet; for the place whereon thou standest *is* holy ground.

1. Pascebat autem Moses oves Jethro soceri sui sacerdotis Midian, duxitque oves post desertum, et venit ad montem Dei, *nempe* Horeb.

2. Et visus est ei Angelus Jehovæ in flamma ignis è medio rubi: et vidit, et ecce rubus ardebat in igne, et rubus ipse non consumebatur.

3. Dixit itaque Moses, Divertam nunc ut videam visionem hanc magnam, quare non comburatur rubus.

4. Et vidit Jehova quod diverteret ad videndum: vocavitque eum Deus è medio rubi, dicens, Moses, Moses. Et respondit, Ecce ego.

5. Tunc dixit, Ne appropinques huc: solve calceamenta è pedibus tuis: quià locus, in quo stas, terra sancta est.

1. *Now Moses kept the flock.* We have already said that he was occupied as a shepherd for a long time (viz., about forty years) before this vision appeared to him. The patience, then, of the holy man is commended by his continuance in this work; not that Moses had any intention of boastfully celebrating his own virtues, but that the Holy Spirit dictated what would be useful to us, and, as it were, suggested it to his mouth, that what he did and suffered might be an example for ever. For he must have had much mental struggle at this tedious delay, when old age, which weakens the body, came on, since even in those days few retained their activity

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after their eightieth year; and although he might have lived frugally, yet temperance could not protect even the most robust body against so many hardships, because it is given to very few persons to be able thus to live in the open air, and to bear heat, and cold, and hunger, constant fatigue, the care of cattle, and other troubles. God, indeed, miraculously supported the holy man in the performance of his arduous duties; but still the internal conflict must have gone on,—why does God so long delay and suspend what he so long ago determined? It was, then, no ordinary virtue which overcame these distracting assaults, which were constantly renewing his anxiety; whilst, in the mean time, he was living poorly, in huts and sheds, as well as often wandering over rough and desert places, though from childhood to mature manhood he had been accustomed to luxury; as he here relates, that, having led his flock across the Desert, he came to Horeb, which certainly could not have been effected without his experiencing the cold as he lay on the ground by night, and burning heat by day. The title of "the mountain of God" refers[1] by anticipation to a future period, when the place was consecrated by the promulgation of the Law there. It is well known that Horeb is the same mountain which is also called Sinai, except that a different name is given to its opposite sides, and, properly speaking, its eastern side is called Sinai, its western, Horeb.[2] Since, then, God appeared there and gave so many manifest signs of his heavenly glory, when he renewed his covenant with his people, and furnished them with a rule of perfect holiness, the place became invested with peculiar dignity.

2. *And the Angel of the Lord appeared unto him.* It was necessary that he should assume a visible form, that he might be seen by Moses, not as he was in his essence, but as

[1] κατὰ προλῆψιν.—*Lat.*

[2] Horeb appears to have been the general name of the whole mountainous district, of which Sinai formed a part. This solution fully meets the objection of certain modern cavillers, who have argued, at least, against the identity of the author of the Pentateuch, if not against its inspiration, on the ground that the same events are recorded as having taken place sometimes on Horeb, sometimes on Sinai. *Vide* Hengstenberg on the Genuineness of the Pentateuch, Ryland's Transl., vol. ii. p. 325; Fisk's Memorial of the Holy Land, p. 146.

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the infirmity of the human mind could comprehend him. For thus we must believe that God, as often as he appeared of old to the holy patriarchs, descended in some way from his majesty, that he might reveal himself as far as was useful, and as far as their comprehension would admit. The same, too, is to be said of angels, who, although they are invisible spirits, yet when it seemed good to the Almighty, assumed some form in which they might be seen. But let us inquire who this Angel was? since soon afterwards he not only calls himself Jehovah, but claims the glory of the eternal and only God. Now, although this is an allowable manner of speaking, because the angels transfer to themselves the person and titles of God, when they are performing the commissions entrusted to them by him; and although it is plain from many passages, and[1] especially from the first chapter of Zechariah, that there is one head and chief of the angels who commands the others, the ancient teachers of the Church have rightly understood that the Eternal Son of God is so called in respect to his office as Mediator, which he figuratively bore from the beginning, although he really took it upon him only at his Incarnation. And Paul sufficiently expounds this mystery to us, when he plainly asserts that Christ was the leader of his people in the Desert. (1 Cor. x. 4.) Therefore, although at that time, properly speaking, he was not yet the messenger of his Father, still his predestinated appointment to the office even then had this effect, that he manifested himself to the patriarchs, and was known in this character. Nor, indeed, had the saints ever any communication with God except through the promised Mediator. It is not then to be wondered at, if the Eternal Word of God, of one Godhead and essence with the Father, assumed the name of "the Angel" on the ground

[1] Calvin's own commentary on Zech. i. 8, will best explain this reference; there, also, he inclines to identify the chief of the Angels with the Son of God. "There were then, as it were, a troop of horsemen: but the Prophet says that one appeared as the chief leader, who was accompanied by others." "There was one more eminent than the rest, and in this there is nothing unusual, for when God sends forth a company of angels, he gives the lead to some one. If we regard this angel to be Christ, the idea is consistent with the common usage of Scripture," &c.—*Com. on Zech.*, pp. 31-33.

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of his future mission. There is a great variety of opinions as to the vision. It is too forced an allegory to make, as some do, the body of Christ of the bush, because his heavenly majesty consumed it not when he chose to inhabit it. It is also improperly wrested by those who refer it to the stubborn spirit of the nation, because the Israelites were like thorns, which yield not to the flames. But when the natural sense is set forth, it will not be necessary to refute those which are improbable. This vision is very similar to that former one which Abraham saw. (Gen. xv. 17.) He saw a burning lamp in the midst of a smoking furnace; and the reason assigned is, that God will not permit his people to be extinguished in darkness. The same similitude answers to the bush retaining its entireness in the midst of the flame. The bush is likened to the humble and despised people; their tyrannical oppression is not unlike the fire which would have consumed them, had not God miraculously interposed. Thus, by the presence of God, the bush escaped safely from the fire; as it is said in Psalm xlvi., that though the waves of trouble beat against the Church and threaten her destruction, yet "shall she not be moved," for "God is in the midst of her." Thus was the cruelly afflicted people aptly represented, who, though surrounded by flames, and feeling their heat, yet remained unconsumed, because they were guarded by the present help of God.

3. *And Moses said, I will now turn aside.* It is certain that his mind was disposed to reverence from no rashness, but by divine inspiration. Although not yet accustomed to visions, he still perceives that this is no unmeaning spectacle, but that some mystery was contained in it, which he must by no means neglect, and to the knowledge of which he was divinely called. In this, too, we must observe his tractableness, in turning aside to learn. For it often happens that God presents himself to us in vain, because we presumptuously reject such great mercy. Let us learn, then, by the example of Moses, as often as God invites us to himself by any sign, to give diligent heed, lest the proffered light be quenched by our own apathy. But from his calling it a "great sight," we gather that he was taught by secret in-

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spiration the depth of the mystery, though it was as yet unknown. In this way God prepared his mind to reverence,[1] that he might the sooner profit by it.

4. *God called unto him out of the midst of the bush.* In the first place, my readers will observe that, as is the case in almost all visions, it was not a voiceless spectacle to alarm the holy man, but that instruction accompanied it by which his mind might obtain encouragement. For there would be no use in visions, if the senses of those who see them were kept in alarm. But although God was unwilling to terrify his servant, yet, in two ways, he claims authority and reverence for his intended address; first, by calling Moses twice by name, he makes his way into the depths of his heart, that, as if cited before the tribunal of God, he may be more attentive in listening; and, again, by commanding him to put off his shoes, he prepares him to humility, by admiration and fear. There is much discussion with respect to the latter clause amongst many, who delight in allegory.[2] I will not recite their various opinions, because a simple exposition of the true meaning will dispose of the whole of their subtle triflings. Moses is commanded to put off his shoes, that by the very bareness of his feet his mind might be disposed to reverential feelings; and on this account, too, he is reminded of the holiness of the ground, because, in our prayers, the bending of the knees, and the uncovering of the head, are helps and excitements to the worship of God. And this, I think, is made sufficiently clear by the reason which is immediately added, that the place on which Moses stood was "holy ground," and, therefore, not rashly, or in a profane manner to be trodden on. Whence we gather, that he was instructed by the outward sign of adoration to enter into the presence of God as a trembling suppliant. He had, indeed, said, "Here am I," (which was a testimony that his mind was teachable, and prepared to obey,) yet it was good that he should be more actively aroused, in order that he might come before God with greater fear. But if this most noble Prophet of God had need of such a preparation, no wonder

[1] A humilité.—*Fr.*

[2] "En curiositez frivoles;" in frivolous subtleties.—*Fr.*

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that God stirs up our unwilling hearts, by many aids, in order that we may worship him in truth. And although the same command is not given to all which was given to Moses, still let us learn, that this is the object of all ceremonies, that the majesty of God, being duly and seriously perceived in our minds, may obtain its rightful honour, and that he may be regarded in accordance with his dignity. If any prefer the deeper meaning (*anagoge,*) that God cannot be heard until we have put off our earthly thoughts, I object not to it; only let the natural sense stand first, that Moses was commanded to put off his shoes, as a preparation to listen with greater reverence to God. If the question be now raised as to the holiness of the place, the reply is easy, that it received this honourable title on account of the vision. Mount Sinai did not, therefore, naturally possess any peculiar sanctity; but because God, who sanctifies all things, deigned to give there the sign of his presence. Thus Bethel was dignified by Jacob with high and honourable titles. (Gen. xxviii. 17.) "How dreadful is this place! this is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven;" because it had been consecrated by a special revelation. For, wherever we see any sign of the glory of God, piety awakens this feeling of admiration in our hearts. In the meantime, however, since we are too prone to superstition, these two errors must be avoided; lest, in our gross imaginations, we should, as it were, draw down God from heaven, and affix him to places on earth; and, also, lest we should account that sanctity perpetual which is only temporary. The remedy of the first evil is to reflect on the nature of God; of the second, to observe his design, how far, and for what use he sanctifies places. For since the nature of God is spiritual, it is not allowable to imagine respecting him anything earthly or gross; nor does his immensity permit of his being confined to place. Again, the sanctity of a place must be restricted to the object of the manifestation. Thus Mount Horeb was made holy in reference to the promulgation of the law, which prescribes the true worship of God. If the descendants of Jacob had considered this, they would never have set up Bethel as a holy place in opposi-

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tion to Sion; because, although God once appeared there to the patriarch, He had never chosen that place; therefore they were wrong in proceeding from a particular instance to a general conclusion.

6. Moreover he said, I *am* the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.

7. And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which *are* in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows;

8. And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

9. Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me: and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them.

6. Ego Deus patris tui, Deus Abraham, Deus Isaac, et Deus Jacob. Et operuit Moses faciem suam, quia timuit aspicere ad Deum.

7. Et dixit Jehovah, Videndo vidi afflictionem populi mei, qui est in Ægypto, et clamorem eorum audivi a facie exactorum ejus: certe cognovi[1] dolores ejus.

8. Descendi itaque ad liberandum eum è manu Ægyptiorum, ad educendum è terra ista in terram fertilem, ac latam, in terram fluentem lacte et melle, in locum Cananæi, et Hitthæi, et Amorrhæi, et Pheresæi, et Hivæi, et Jebusæi.

9. Nunc ecce clamor filiorum Israel venit ad me: atque etiam vidi afflictionem qua Ægyptii opprimunt eos.

6. *I am the God of thy father.* He does not merely proclaim himself as some heavenly power, nor claim for himself only the general name of God, but recalling to memory his covenant formerly made with the patriarchs, he casts down all idols and false gods, and confirms Moses in the true faith. For hence he knew surely, that he had not set his hopes in vain in the God whom Abraham and the other patriarchs had worshipped, and who, by the privilege of adoption, had separated their race from all other nations. And lest, through the long lapse of time, Moses might think that what had been handed down concerning Abraham was obsolete, He expressly asserts that His faithfulness still held good, by calling Himself "the God of his father." But since, in setting forth the hope of redemption, He renews the memory of His covenant, we gather that it was not obliterated from the heart of Moses; because it would have been absurd so to speak of a thing unknown; nor would it have

[1] *Vel*, quia cognovi.

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been of any use to make mention of promises of which no recollection existed in the heart of Moses. Since, therefore, the hope of the redemption of the chosen people depended on the covenant which God had formerly made with the patriarchs, He shews that He had not been trusted to in vain, because His engagement would not be ineffectual. It was not so much a sign of reverence as of terror that Moses covered his face; yet must we take both feelings into account, that he felt sudden alarm at the sight of God, and voluntarily adored his majesty. It was necessary that his mind should be affected, and impressed with reverential feelings, that he might be more ready to obey. We read in Isaiah, (chap. vi. 2,) that even the angels veil their faces, because they cannot bear the infinite glory of God; no wonder then that a mortal man dared not to look upon him. The name of God is appropriated to the visible appearance in which his majesty was concealed.

7. *And the Lord said.* Before he delegates to Moses the office of delivering his people, God encourages him in a somewhat lengthened address to the hope of victory and success; for we know how doubts enfeeble and hold back the mind with anxiety and care; Moses then could not engage in or set about his work earnestly until furnished with the confidence of divine assistance. Therefore God promises to be his guide, that in reliance upon such aid he may gird himself boldly to the warfare. From hence we may gather this general doctrine—that, however slow and unwilling we may naturally be to obey God, we must not turn away from any command when he assures us of success, because no stimulus can be stronger than the promise that his hand shall be always ready to help us when we follow whither he calls us. With this object God thus speaks before he makes mention of the vocation of Moses, that he may more cheerfully enter upon his work, in the assurance of a successful issue. Moreover, when God has founded the redemption of his people upon his gratuitous covenant, and therefore on his own free bounty, he adds another argument derived from his justice, namely, that it is impossible for the judge of the world not to help the oppressed and afflicted when they are undeservedly

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mistreated, and especially when they implore his assistance. This is true generally, that God will be the avenger of all unjust cruelty; but his special aid may be expected by believers whom he has taken into his friendship and protection. Accordingly, when he has declared that he has been moved by his adoption of this people not to desert it in its extreme necessity, he adds, in confirmation, that he has come to restrain their oppressors' tyranny, since he has heard the cry of the afflicted. This was said at that particular time to encourage Moses; but it ought to afford no common consolation in the troubles of us all when we are groaning under any unjust burden; for God, whose sight was then so clear, is not now so blind as not to see all injustice, and to pity them that call upon him. Although the expression here used in the original, "seeing I have seen," is a Hebraism, still it signifies that, while God delays and suspends punishment, his winking at men's evil deeds is no proof that he does not behold them from heaven, and will in due time appear as their judge, for the words denote a continued observation—as much as to say, that even then he was beholding them, when by his quiescence he might have seemed to neglect the tribulation of his people. By adding that he had heard their cry, he indirectly rebukes their lukewarmness, since we do not read that they cried until compelled by their extremity and despair. Therefore there is no cause for wonder that they almost wasted away under their misfortunes before succour came, because their prayers were scarcely offered[1] after a long time. And not even then is it probable (as I said before) that they prayed earnestly; but God had more respect to his mercy and faithfulness than to their right and well-grounded preparedness. In these words the Spirit exhorts us to call upon God, and not to be stunned and stupified by our cares and sorrows, but to learn to fly straightway to this sacred anchor; as the Psalmist also says, "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry," (Psalm xxxiv. 15,) and as he testifies in another place, (Psalm lxv. 2,) that he is a God that

[1] "Jusques à ce qu'il ait été contraint jusques au dernier desespoir;" until they had been driven even to complete despair.—*Fr.*

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heareth prayer; thus does he anxiously invite us to this remedy whenever we are hard pressed. When he speaks of them as his "people which are in Egypt," the apparent inconsistency does not a little tend to confirmation, implying that the promise which he made to Abraham with regard to inheriting the land of Canaan would not be without effect; for it would not accord with the truth of God that a people to whom an inheritance elsewhere was given should sojourn in Egypt, unless it was to be freed in the appointed season. It might also be understood *adversatively*—although a people dwelling in Egypt be far from the land of Canaan, and so might seem in a manner to be put away from me, still have I heard their cry. But the probable meaning is, that because it was not fit that a people which was to inherit the Holy Land should always remain sojourning elsewhere, therefore God would shortly deliver them. In the end of the verse the repetition in other words, "I know their sorrows," is also an amplification of what came before.

8. *And I am come down to deliver them.* He now more clearly announces his intention not only to relieve their present calamity, but to fulfil the promise given to Abraham as to the possession of Canaan. He therefore marks the end of their deliverance, that they might enjoy the rest and inheritance promised to them. It is a common manner of speaking to say, God descends to us, when he actually puts forth his power and shews that he is near us; as much as to say, that the Israelites would experience plainly that his help was at hand. The "large" land seems to be brought in comparison with the straits in which they now were; for although the land of Goshen was fertile and convenient, still it scarcely afforded room enough for their increasing multitude; besides, there they were kept shut in like slaves in a house of bondage. Finally, he again assures them that he would deal graciously with them, because he had heard their cry, and was not ignorant of their sorrows, although he might have long delayed to avenge them.

10. Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt.

10. Veni itaque, et mittam te ad Pharaonem, ut educas populum meum filios Israel ex Ægypto.

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11. And Moses said unto God, Who *am* I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?

12. And he said, Certainly I will be with thee; and this *shall be* a token unto thee that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain.

13. And Moses said unto God, Behold, *when* I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What *is* his name? what shall I say unto them?

14. And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.

11. Et dixit Moses ad Deum, Quis sum ego ut vadam ad Pharaonem, et educam filios Israel ex Ægypto?

12. Et respondit, Quia tecum ero: et hoc tibi signum quod ego miserim te: Quum eduxeris populum ipsum ex Ægypto, coletis Deum prope montem hunc.

13. Et ait Moses ad Deum, Ecce ubi ego venero ad filios Israel, et dixero eis, Deus patrum vestrorum misit me ad vos: tunc si dixerint, Quod nomen ejus est? quid dicam illis?

14. Tunc respondit Deus Mosi, Sum qui sum. Et ait, Sic dices ad filios Israel, Sum misit me ad vos.

10. *Come now therefore.* After God had furnished his servant with promises to engage him more cheerfully in his work, he now adds commands, and calls him to undertake the office to which he is designed. And this is the best encouragement to duty, when God renders those, who would be otherwise slow through doubt, sure of good success; for although we must obey God's plain commands without delay or hesitation, still he is willing to provide against our sluggishness by promising that our endeavours shall not be vain or useless. And certainly it is a feeling naturally implanted in us all, that we are excited into action by a confidence of good success; therefore although God sometimes, for the purpose of trying the obedience of his servants, deprives them of hope, and commands them peremptorily to do this or that, still he more often cuts off hesitation by promising a successful issue. Thus, then, he now aroused Moses to perform his commands by setting the hope of the deliverance before him. The *copula* must be resolved into the *illative particle*, because the command and vocation undoubtedly depend upon the promise.

11. *Who am I?* He cannot yet be accused of disobedience, because, conscious of his own weakness, he answers that he is not sufficient for it, and therefore refuses the commission. His comparison of himself with Pharaoh was an additional

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pretext for declining it. This, then, seems to be the excuse of modesty and humility; and as such, I conceive it not only to be free from blame, but worthy of praise. It is no contradiction to this that he knew God to be the proposer of this very arduous task, for he wonders that some one else was not rather chosen, since God has so many thousands of beings at command. But another question arises, why he, who forty years ago had been so forward in killing the Egyptian, and, relying on the vocation of God, had dared to perform so perilous a deed, should now timidly deny his sufficiency for the deliverance of the people? It does not seem probable that his vigour had decreased from age; though youth is naturally ardent, and age induces coldness and supineness: but it appears that his fault was of another kind, viz., that he advanced hastily at first, not having sufficiently considered his own powers, nor weighed the greatness of his undertaking. For although such precipitation may be praiseworthy, still it often fails in the middle of its course; just as precocious fruits either never arrive at maturity, or soon perish. Therefore, although Moses afforded an example of a noble disposition, when he so hastily devoted himself to God's work; yet was he not then provided with that firmness which would support him to the end, because the faith, which prevailed in his heart, had not yet struck its roots deeply enough, nor had he thoroughly examined his own capability. Therefore does he tremble when he is brought to the point, though he had been more confident when its difficulty was as yet unconsidered. So daily do we, who appear to ourselves of good courage[1] when out of the reach of darts, begin to quake as the battle comes near us; because we perceive the dangers which did not affect us at a distance. No wonder, then, if Moses, who had been ready to obey forty years ago, and who had perseveringly cherished in himself this holy feeling, is filled with new alarm, when he is commanded to enter on the field of battle.

12. *And he said, Certainly I will be with thee.* It is remarkable that God sets his ready help alone against all to overcome every fear, and to take away every scruple; as

[1] "Courageux comme lions;" as bold as lions.—*Fr.*

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much as to say, It matters not who Moses is, or what may be his strength, so that God be his leader. In these words we are taught, that he is never regarded by us with due honour, unless when, contented with his assistance alone, we seek for no ground of confidence apart from him; and, although our own weakness may alarm us, think it enough that he is on our side. Hence these celebrated confessions of his saints: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me." (Ps. xxiii. 4.) Again, "In God have I put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me." (Ps. lvi. 4.) Again, "I will not be afraid of ten thousands of the people." (Ps. iii. 6.) Again, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. viii. 31.) Therefore, in proportion to our advancement in the faith, when we are exposed to the greatest dangers, do we magnify the power of God, and, exalting ourselves in that, advance boldly against all the world; and this is the ground of firm and unwearied obedience, when the thought that God is with us is deeply rooted in our hearts. But, after Moses is commanded to turn away his reflections from himself, and to fix all his regards upon the promised help of God, he is confirmed by a sign, that the Israelites should sacrifice on Mount Horeb three days after their departure from Egypt. Still this promise appears neither very apt nor opportune, since it would not exist in effect till the thing was done. I pass over the forced interpretations, which some, to avoid this absurdity, have adduced; since others wisely and prudently observe, that the confirmation which we receive from posterior tokens, is neither useless nor vain, and that there are examples of it elsewhere in Scripture. Samuel, by anointing David, promises that he shall be king of the people; and pronounces that this shall be the sign that the anointing is from God. (1 Sam. xvi. 13.) David had long to battle with misfortunes before he could enjoy this token, yet will it not be thought superfluous, since in its season it confirmed the favour of God. Isaiah, prophesying of the raising of the siege of the city, adds a sign, "Ye shall eat this year such as groweth of itself; and the second year that which springeth

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of the same; and in the third year sow ye and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruit thereof." (Is. xxxvii. 30.) It was said to John the Baptist, "Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost." (John i. 33.) Yet, before he beheld that sign, he already knew that Christ was the Son of God; for the prophecies of both his parents were well known to him. But there is nothing absurd in the faith, which is founded on the word, being increased by the addition of a sign. In fine, God magnifies his mercy by the new mercy which supervenes, thus, as it were, heaping up the measure; and, in truth, the vocation of Moses was ratified by a remarkable proof, when, in the very place on which he then stood, the people, brought forth by his instrumentality, offered a solemn sacrifice. In the meantime God kept his servant in suspense, as though he had said, Let me perform what I have decreed; in due time you will know that you were not sent by me in vain, when you have brought the people safely to this spot.

13. *Behold, when I come to the children of Israel.* If we believe that Moses spoke his own sentiments here, he would say, that he could not be the messenger of an unknown God; which seems highly improbable. For who can think that the faith of the holy Prophet was so obliterated, that he was forgetful of the true God, whom he had devoutly served? Whereas, in the name of his elder son, he had borne witness to his solemn recollection of Him, when he voluntarily professed himself a stranger in the land of Midian. Nor does it appear at all more suitable to the children of Israel, in whose mouths the covenant made with their fathers constantly was. It will not, however, be far from the truth, if we suppose that the faith both of Moses and the Israelites had grown somewhat faint and rusty. He himself, with his father-in-law, was altogether without the instruction which would retain him in that peculiar worship, and in that knowledge, which he had imbibed in Egypt; and the whole people had departed far away from the course of their fathers; for although the brightness of the true and ancient religion was not entirely gone, still it only shone

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in small sparks. But whilst Moses tacitly confesses his ignorance, because he was not sufficiently familiar with the doctrine handed down from the holy patriarchs, yet because he was about to present himself to the people as a stranger, he infers that he shall be rejected, unless he brings with him some watchword which will be acknowledged. "I will declare that which thou commandest, (he seems to say,) that I am sent by the God of our fathers; but they will deride and despise my mission, unless I shall present some surer token, from whence they may learn that I have not falsely made use of thy name." He therefore seeks for a name which may be a distinguishing mark; since it is not a mere word or syllable which is here in question, but a testimony, by which he may persuade the Israelites that they are heard on the score of the covenant with their fathers.

14. *I AM THAT I AM.* The verb in the Hebrew is in the future tense, "I will be what I will be;" but it is of the same force as the present, except that it designates the perpetual duration of time. This is very plain, that God attributes to himself alone divine glory, because he is self-existent and therefore eternal; and thus gives being and existence to every creature. Nor does he predicate of himself anything common, or shared by others; but he claims for himself eternity as peculiar to God alone, in order that he may be honoured according to his dignity. Therefore, immediately afterwards, contrary to grammatical usage, he used the same verb in the first person as a substantive, annexing it to a verb in the third person; that our minds may be filled with admiration as often as his incomprehensible essence is mentioned. But although philosophers discourse in grand terms of this eternity, and Plato constantly affirms that God is peculiarly τὸ ὄν (the Being); yet they do not wisely and properly apply this title, viz., that this one and only Being of God absorbs all imaginable essences; and that, thence, at the same time, the chief power and government of all things belong to him. For from whence come the multitude of false gods, but from impiously tearing the divided Deity into pieces by foolish imaginations? Wherefore, in order

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rightly to apprehend the one God, we must first know, that all things in heaven and earth derive[1] at His will their essence, or subsistence from One, who only truly is. From this Being all power is derived; because, if God sustains all things by his excellency, he governs them also at his will. And how would it have profited Moses to gaze upon the secret essence of God, as if it were shut up in heaven, unless, being assured of his omnipotence, he had obtained from thence the buckler of his confidence? Therefore God teaches him that He alone is worthy of the most holy name, which is profaned when improperly transferred to others; and then sets forth his inestimable excellency, that Moses may have no doubt of overcoming all things under his guidance. We will consider in the sixth chapter the name of Jehovah, of which this is the root.

15. And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this *is* my name for ever, and this *is* my memorial unto all generations.

16. Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared unto me, saying, I have surely visited you, and *seen* that which is done to you in Egypt:

17. And I have said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt unto the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, unto a land flowing with milk and honey.

15. Et dixit rursum Deus ad Mosen, Sic dices filiis Israel, Jehova Deus patrum vestrorum, Deus Abrahæ, Deus Isaac, et Deus Jacob, misit me ad vos. Hoc est nomen meum in perpetuum, et memoriale meum in seculum et seculum.

16. Vade et congrega seniores Israel, et dices illis, Jehova Deus patrum vestrorum apparuit mihi, Deus Abrahæ, Isaac, et Jacob, dicendo, Recordando recordatus sum vestri, et quid vobis factum fuerit in Ægypto.

17. Propterea dixi, Educam vos ex afflictione Ægypti ad terram Chananæi, et Hitthæi, et Amorrhæi, et Pheresæi, et Hivæi, et Jebusæi, ad terram fluentem lacte et melle.

15. *And God said moreover.* God again assumes his name taken from the covenant which he had made with Abraham and his posterity, that the Israelites may know that they do not deceive themselves in an uncertain God, provided they depart not from the religion of their fathers; for as soldiers assemble round their standard to maintain the order of their ranks, so does he command them to look back upon the special grace of their adoption, and to know

[1] Precario.—*Lat.* De grace.—*Fr.*

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that they are a people elected of God, because they are Abraham's sons. He confines them within these limits, that they may not wander about in search of God. For we know that whatever opinions were held by the Gentiles as to the Deity, were not only entangled with many errors, but were also ambiguous, so that they were always wavering with respect to them. God demands another kind of religion from his people, on the certainty of which their hearts may depend. Besides, their long sojourn in the land of Egypt, although it had not destroyed the knowledge of the true God, had yet much obscured that light of revelation which their fathers possessed. And again, the promise might seem to be obsolete, when they had received no assistance, whilst overwhelmed in such an abyss of misery; and on this ground the faith received from their fathers had undoubtedly grown cold. Wherefore, that they may learn to repose upon it, he calls himself the God of their fathers, and declares, that by this title he will be celebrated for ever; for I cannot consent to refer this to the previous expression, "I am that I am," since the context does not admit of it. Hence might be inferred the incomparable love of God towards his chosen people, because he had passed over all the nations of the earth, and had attached himself to them alone. But we must remember, that although it was honourable to Abraham and the patriarchs for God to take his name from them, yet that the main object of this was to confirm the truth of his promise. There may be an apparent incongruity in saying, "this is my memorial unto all generations," because a much more excellent memorial succeeded in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ; but my reply is, that since, in the coming of Christ, the truth of the covenant made with Abraham was shewn forth, and was thus demonstrated to be firm and infallible, its memory was rather renewed than destroyed; and that thus it still survives and flourishes in the Gospel, since Abraham even now ceases not to be the father of the faithful, under the one Head We conclude that God would not be spoken of on earth, without the effects of his gratuitous adoption appearing, by which he may be proved to be faithful and true.

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16. *Go and gather.* Because it was not easy either to gather the whole people into one place, or for his commission to be heard by so great a multitude, Moses is commanded to begin with the elders, and to speak to them concerning their coming deliverance, that they may thus by their authority arouse the body of the people to a good hope. For their dismissal must be sought for from the king in the name of all, and all their minds prepared for departure; since, unless they had timely notice of it, there would have been no general consent to embrace the mercy of God. It was then of great importance that the vocation of Moses should be well known, that they might boldly follow him as the leader set over them by God. He does not express without a purpose, that the God who had been seen by him, was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; for the vision, which would have been otherwise hardly credited by the people, depended on the ancient covenant which was deposited with them. Therefore, in order to obtain belief for his words, Moses reminds them that the deliverance, of which he was now about to treat, and of which he is appointed by God as the leader, was formerly promised in Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Lastly, because we usually receive with difficulty what is new and strange, Moses therefore lays his foundation on the old revelations, which were beyond the reach of doubt. But he repeats what he had before related to be said to himself, thus setting before the others what he had privately heard to assure him of his vocation. We know that when God does not immediately succour us in our adversities, our minds are worn down with grief, and sink into despair; because we think that God has no care for us. Lest, therefore, the minds of the Israelites should despond, Moses is commanded to tell them that it is God's time for remembering them; and, although he might seem not to behold for a while, yet that he would not for ever forget his own people. What follows, that the injuries done to them by the Egyptians had come into account, is added in confirmation; for, since he is judge of the world, he cannot but rise as an avenger after long endurance of injustice and tyranny. Let us, too, learn from this passage, when God

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seems to turn away his face from us, by delaying to help us, to wait patiently until he looks upon us in due season; since his forgetfulness is only temporary, when he gives us over to the will of our enemies. I have shewn elsewhere how these phrases are to be understood, viz., that according to the estimate of our own senses, things are attributed to God which do not properly belong to him.

17. *And I have said.* By this expression God reminds us that he in his secret counsel determines what he will do, and therefore that we must put a restraint on our desires, which otherwise press forward too fast, and let him freely and voluntarily appoint what he knows to be best to be done; not because he has need of taking time to deliberate, but that we may learn to depend on his providence. By this decree the children of Israel were assured that the end of their woes was near, because there is nothing which can prevent God from performing his work. But he speaks briefly, as of a thing well known; because what had been handed down through the patriarchs, as to their future deliverance, was not entirely forgotten. He enumerates several nations whose lands He would give them, that he might thus the more attract them to come forth. With the same object he affirms that the whole country flows "with milk and honey," lest its barrenness should alarm them, because famine had driven their fathers out from thence. But although the land of Canaan was naturally fertile, there is no doubt but that its fruitfulness chiefly arose from the blessing of God. The conclusion is, that a spacious dwelling-place is prepared for them, since for their sake God will drive out many nations, that they may possess the habitations of them all; and that, finally, they need not fear want, because God will abundantly supply them with food, as if the whole of that land were filled with rivers of milk and honey.

18. And they shall hearken to thy voice: and thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt, and ye shall say unto him, The Lord God of the Hebrews hath met with us; and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God.

18. Et postquam audierint vocem tuam, ingredieris et seniores Israel ad regem Ægypti, dicetisque ei, Iehova Deus Hebræorum occurrit nobis: nunc igitur eamus per iter trium dierum in desertum et sacrificemus Iehovæ Deo nostro.

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19. And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand.

20. And I will stretch out my hand, and smite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the midst thereof: and after that he will let you go.

21. And I will give this people favour in the sight of the Egyptians: and it shall come to pass, that, when ye go, ye shall not go empty:

22. But every woman shall borrow of her neighbour, and of her that sojourneth in her house, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: and ye shall put *them* upon your sons, and upon your daughters; and ye shall spoil the Egyptians.

19. Ego autem novi quod non permittet vobis rex Ægypti ut eatis, nisi in manu forti.

20. Ideo mittam manum meam, et percutiam Ægyptum cunctis miraculis meis quæ facturus sum in medio ejus: atque ita postea dimittet vos.

21. Et dabo gratiam populo huic in oculis Ægyptiorum: et accidet ut abeundo non abeatis vacui.

22. Et postulabit mulier a vicina sua, et ab hospita domus suæ, vasa argentea et vasa aurea, et vestes: quæ imponetis filiis vestris et filiabus vestris: et spoliabitis Ægyptum.

18. *And they shall hearken to thy voice.*[1] The literal translation is, "They shall hearken to thy voice," which many take to be a promise from God that they should be obedient; but the sense given in the Latin, "after they shall have heard thy voice," seems more consonant, that first of all He should command them by the mouth of Moses, and that then they should accompany him in bearing the message to Pharaoh. For, before so difficult an undertaking was enjoined to them, it was desirable that the authority of God should be propounded to them, so that they might go about it with unwavering hearts. The sum of the message is, that they should seek permission from Pharaoh to go and sacrifice; but lest they might be thought to do so from mere unfounded impulse, they are desired to premise that God had met with them and had given them the command. For the word which expresses his *meeting* with them, means that he presented himself voluntarily. They had indeed cried out before, and often appealed to the faithfulness and mercy of God; yet still this was a voluntary meeting with them, when, contrary to the hope of them all, he avowed that he would be their deliverer, for, as we have already said, they cried out more from the urgency of their affliction than from confidence in prayer. A pretext is suggested to them,

[1] *Lat.*, "Et postquam audierint vocem;" after they *shall have* hearkened to thy voice.

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by which suspicion and anger may be turned away from themselves ; for a free permission to depart altogether, by which grievous loss would have arisen to the tyrant, never would have been accorded. Besides, by refusing so equitable a demand, he despoiled himself of his royal right and power, since he thus withheld His due honour from the King of kings ; for although the Israelites were under his dominion, yet did not his rule extend so far as to defraud God of his rightful worship. It was expedient, too, that the people should depart without the king's permission only for very good reasons, lest hereafter license of rebellion should be given to other subjects. Pharaoh indeed suspected differently, that the sacrifice was a mere false pretence ; but since this mistrust proceeded from his tyranny, his ingratitude was sufficiently proclaimed by it, because through his own evil conscience he forbade that God should be served. Whatever, again, might be his feelings, still the miracles by which the command was followed must needs have taught him that their mission proceeded from God. If the Israelites had merely spoken, and no confirmation of their words had been given, he might perhaps have naturally guarded himself against deception; but when God openly shewed that he was the originator of this departure, and that he commanded the sacrifice beyond the bounds of Egypt, all grounds of excuse are taken away ; and thus the departure of the people is placed out of the reach of calumny. If any object that it is alien from the nature of God to countenance any craft or pretence, the reply is easy,—that he was bound by no necessity to lay open his whole counsel to the tyrant. They mistake who suppose that there is a kind of falsehood implied in these words; for God had no desire that his people should use any deceit, he only concealed from the tyrant (as He had a perfect right to do) what He was about ultimately to effect; and in this way He detected and brought to light his obstinacy. In a word, God entered the lists for the Israelites, not in an earthly controversy, but for religion, to which all the rights of kings must give way. But Jehovah calls himself the God of the Hebrews, that Pharaoh may know him to be the peculiar God of that nation, and that their form of

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worship was different from the customs of Egypt, and, in fact, that he is the only true God, and all others are fictitious.

19. *And I am sure that the king of Egypt.* God forearms his people, lest, suffering a repulse at their first onset, they should retire, and abandon in despair the work enjoined to them. It was, indeed, a hard thing to hear that their expedition would be vain; and that they might as well address themselves to the trunk of a tree, since there was no hope of reaching the obstinate heart of Pharaoh; but they would have been much more discouraged by this trial, if his stubbornness had been discovered unexpectedly. Therefore God foretells that their words would avail nothing; but at the same time he announces that he should succeed by his own wondrous power. If any think it absurd for these unhappy men to be wearied by their useless labour, and to be repulsed with ridicule and insult, I answer, that this was for the sake of example, and that it was advantageous for setting forth God's glory, that the king, having been civilly applied to, should betray his impious perversity, since nothing could be more just than that what he had unjustly refused, should be extorted from him against his will. But interpreters differ as to the meaning of the words. For some translate it literally from the Hebrew, "no, not by a mighty hand;" as though God said that the pride of the king would be unconquerable, and not to be subdued by any power or force; but the context requires a different sense, because the remedy is afterwards opposed to it, "and I will stretch out my hand;" and the result is added, that Pharaoh, overcome at length by the plagues, would let the people go. And this view is grammatically correct; for the Hebrews use the word ולא,[1] *velo*, for "except." Therefore God commands his people to be firm and confident, although Pharaoh may not immediately obey; because he would evidence his power[2] in a remarkable manner for their deliverance. In the meantime he arouses them to hope by the promise of a successful issue; since he will forcibly compel Pharaoh to yield.

[1] ולא is here rendered *unless* by the LXX., Vulgate, Pagninus, Luther, Vatablus, and Diodati; and by the equivalent, *but* in the margin of *A. V. S. M.* has *neque;* but adds, "alii exponunt ולא pro nisi."—*W.*

[2] Il a deliberé de faire un chef-d'œuvre.—*Fr.*

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21. *And I will give this people favour.* By this extreme exercise of His bounty He encourages the Israelites to contend and strive more heartily; since otherwise it would be hard for them to struggle with the great cruelty of the king. Therefore He promises them not only liberty, but also abundance of rich and precious things. But, inasmuch as this was hard to believe, that the Egyptians their bitterest enemies would become so kind and liberal as to exert such beneficence towards them, God reminds them that it is in His power to turn the hearts of men whithersoever He will. He proclaims, then, that He will cause these wolves of Egypt to become like lambs, and that they who used to bite and devour should now supply them with the very wool from their backs. This passage contains rich and extensive doctrine; that whenever men cruelly rage against us, it does not happen contrary to the design of God, because He can in a moment quiet them; and that He grants this license to their cruelty, because it is expedient thus to humble and chasten us. Again, we gather from hence, that we have no enemies so fierce and barbarous, as that it is not easy for Him readily to tame them. If we were surely persuaded of this, that men's hearts are controlled, and guided by the secret inspiration of God, we should not so greatly dread their hatred, and threatenings, and terrors, nor should we be so easily turned from the path of duty through fear of them. This alarm is the just reward of our unbelief, when we repose not on God's providence; and although we ought to take pains to conciliate the kindness of all by courtesy, yet should we remember that our efforts will not gain their favour, unless God should so incline their hearts.

22. *But every woman shall borrow.*[1] Those who consider these means of enriching the people to be but little in accordance with the justice of God, themselves reflect but little

[1] *Lat.*, "et postulabit mulier;" and *every* woman shall ask. It will be observed that *C.* has avoided the error of employing the word *borrow* here. The verb שָׁאַל, *shal*, means simply to *ask* or *request*, and cannot properly be rendered *borrow*, unless the context makes it incontestable that an engagement to return the thing asked for is implied. *C.* has followed *S. M.* in employing the word *postulabit;* and apologizes for using *hospes* in the next clause, where *S. M.* had used *cohabitatrix.*—*W.*

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how widely that justice of which they speak extends. I acknowledge that it is His attribute to defend every one's rights, to prohibit theft, to condemn deceit and rapine; but let us see what every one's property is. Who will boast that he has anything, except what is given him by God? And all is given on this condition, that each one should possess according to His will whatever God pleases, who is free to take away at any moment whatsoever He has given. The Hebrews spoiled the Egyptians; and should the latter complain that an injury is done them, they would argue against God that He had transferred His own free gifts from them to others. Would this complaint be listened to, that God, in whose hands are the ends of the earth, who by His power appoints the bounds of nations, and reduces their kings to poverty, had deprived certain persons of their furniture and jewels? Another defence is set up by some, that the Hebrews took nothing which was not their own, but only the wages which were due to them; because they were iniquitously driven to servile labours, and had subsisted meanly upon what belonged to themselves. And certainly it would have been just that their labour should have been recompensed in some way. But there is no need of weighing the judgment of God by ordinary rules, since we have already seen that all the possessions of the world are His, to distribute them according to His pleasure. Nevertheless I do not thus suppose Him to be without law; for although His power is above all laws, still, because His will is the most certain rule of perfect equity, whatever He does must be perfectly right; and therefore He is free from laws, because He is a law to Himself, and to all. Neither would I simply say with Augustin,[1] that this was a command of God which should not be canvassed but obeyed, because He knows that He commands justly, and that his servants must obediently perform whatever He commands. This indeed is truly said, and yet we must hold fast that higher principle, that, since whatever people call their own they possess only by God's bounty, there is no juster title to possession than His gift. We will not therefore say that the Hebrew women purloined that which God ordered them to

[1] Contrà Faustum, lib. xxii. cap. lxxi.

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take, and which He chose to bestow upon them; neither will God be accounted unjust in bestowing nothing but what was His own.[1] The word which I have translated "*hospitem*," or "hostess," some understand as a "fellow-sojourner;" and this is not very important, because we gather from the other word, that the Egyptians were mixed among the Hebrews. In the end of the verse, because the original expresses, "ye shall put them upon your sons, and upon your daughters," almost all interpreters expound it to mean that they should ornament them; but it seems to me that it only refers to the abundance of the spoil; as much as to say, you shall not only obtain as much as you can carry yourselves, but shall also load your sons and daughters.

CHAPTER FOURTH.

1. And Moses answered and said, But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The Lord hath not appeared unto thee.

1. Tunc respondit Moses, et dixit, Sed ecce non credent mihi, neque obedient voci meæ quia dicent, Non apparuit tibi Jehova.

2. And the Lord said unto him, What *is* that in thine hand? and he said, A rod.

2. Et dixit ad eum Jehova, Quid est hoc in manu tua? Et dixit, Baculus.

3. And he said, Cast it on the ground. And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from before it.

3. Tunc dixit, Projice eum in terram. Et projecit in terram, et factus est serpens, et fugit Moses a conspectu ejus.

4. And the Lord said unto Moses, Put forth thine hand, and take it by

4. Et dixit Jehova ad Mosen, Extende manum tuam, et apprehende

[1] Prof. Hengstenberg quotes this passage from *C.*, and calls it "the traditional vindication,"—"which leaves quite untouched the point in which the difficulty peculiarly lies." He also notices the solution of Michaelis, viz., that the Israelites borrowed with the intention of returning the goods; as well as other no less unsatisfactory explanations. His own is, that the idea of a *gift*, and not a *loan*, is the only one which either the circumstances of the case or the language itself admits. "They, (the Israelites,)" he says, "asked," and this reference leads to a contest of *asking* and *giving*, in which the latter gains the upper hand. It is immediately connected with "the Lord gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians," and is marked as a consequence of it. The liberal giving of the Egyptians proceeded from the love and good-will which the Lord awakened in their hearts towards Israel. He traces the misapprehension to "an error in the very faulty Alexandrian version, which substitutes *lending* for *giving*. Jerome, who commonly follows it, was led by it to a similar mistake, and, through him, Luther, who alludes mostly to his translation—the Vulgate." —*Hengstenberg*, vol. ii. pp. 417-432.

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the tail. And he put forth his hand, and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand:

5. That they may believe that the Lord God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared unto thee.

6. And the Lord said furthermore unto him, Put now thine hand into thy bosom. And he put his hand into his bosom: and when he took it out, behold, his hand *was* leprous as snow.

7. And he said, Put thine hand into thy bosom again. And he put his hand into his bosom again; and plucked it out of his bosom, and, behold, it was turned again as his *other* flesh.

8. And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe thee, neither hearken to the voice of the first sign, that they will believe the voice of the latter sign.

9. And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe also these two signs, neither hearken unto thy voice, that thou shalt take of the water of the river, and pour *it* upon the dry *land:* and the water, which thou takest out of the river, shall become blood upon the dry *land.*

caudam ejus. Et extendit manum suam, et apprehendit eum: et factus est baculus in manu ejus;

5. Ut credant quod apparuerit tibi Jehova Deus patrum ipsorum, Deus Abraham, Deus Isaac, et Deus Jacob.

6. Et dixit Jehova illi rursum, Induc nunc manum tuam in sinum tuum. Et induxit manum suam in sinum suum, et ecce manus ejus leprosa quasi nix.

7. Et ait, Reduc manum tuam ad sinum tuum. Et reduxit manum suam ad sinum suum: et postquam extraxit e sinu suo, ecce, reversa est sicut caro ejus.

8. Et erit, si non crediderint tibi, neque obedierint voci signi prioris, credent voci signi posterioris.

9. Erit autem, si non crediderint etiam duobus signis istis, neque obedierint voci tuæ, tunc accipies ex aquis fluvii, et effundes in aridam: et erunt aquæ quas sumpseris e fluvio, erunt *inquam* sanguis in arida.

1. *And Moses answered.* Moses relates in this chapter how hesitatingly he obeyed God, not from stubbornness, but from timidity, for he does not shake off the yoke, as unruly beasts do, but shrinks away from it, that it may not be placed upon him.[1] And hence we may better perceive under what infirmity he laboured, so that his faith was almost stifled. On the one side, he was willing and ready to obey; but when the arduous difficulties of his task presented themselves, he could not escape from this conflict until he had exhausted all efforts to escape. Nor indeed can we greatly wonder that he resisted for a time, since he could see scarcely any advantage in his undertaking. I admit that he ought to have proceeded according to God's command, even with his

[1] "Pensant qu'il ne luy peut estre approprié;" thinking that it cannot be fitted to him.—*Fr.*

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eyes shut, since on His will alone all believers are bound to depend; he ought not to have judged of a thing (in itself) incredible, from his own reasoning, but from the voice of God. Nor, in point of fact, did he either refuse to credit God's words, or wish to reject the burden imposed upon him; but when, on the other hand, he beheld dangers from which he could not disentangle himself, his mind was thus a prey to distracting feelings. Neither is there any believer who is not often drawn into such harassing discussions, whenever his mind is darkened by the perception of obstacles. There was, therefore, in the mind of Moses, willingness and zeal, though alacrity and firmness were wanting; because through his weakness he was compelled to hold back by the hinderances which presented themselves. We must carefully distinguish between the timidity which delays our progress and the bold refusal which is allied to contempt. Many, in flying from trouble, are so withheld from duty, that they grow hardened in their inactivity; while those who desire to act rightly, although through anxiety and fear they apparently recoil, still aspire to ulterior progress, and, in a word, do not so far alternate as to withdraw themselves altogether from the command of God. Moses seems, indeed, to murmur, and to enter into altercation with God; but whether this were audacity or simplicity, there was more of modesty in it, than as if he had hidden himself in silence, as we have said that many do, who by their silence only strengthen themselves in the liberty to disobey. This was clearly his object, that he might afterwards be more fitted to proceed. The holy man was very anxious, because he knew from experience that his countrymen were depraved, and almost intractable; disburdening himself, then, of this anxiety into the bosom of God, he desires to be confirmed by a fresh promise, so that he may be freed from this impediment, and proceed with alacrity.

2. *What is that in thine hand?* In accordance with the idiom of the Hebrew language, Moses now explains more fully, and more distinctly pursues, what he had before only generally alluded to respecting the signs. In the three signs which he refers to, we must consider their respective *mean-*

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ings. The pastoral crook, which he carried in his hand, is flung on the ground, and becomes a serpent; again it is taken back into his hand, and recovers its original nature. I doubt not but that God wished to shew him, that although his condition was abject and despicable, still he would be formidable to the king of Egypt. For his rod was the symbol of a shepherd; and what would be more contemptible than for a keeper of sheep to come up from the desert, and to oppose to the sceptre of a most powerful king that crook, by which he could scarcely protect himself and his flock from wild beasts? But God assures him, that although deprived of earthly splendour, wealth, or power, he would still be terrible to Pharaoh; as much as to say, that he need not fear lest Pharaoh should despise him, or take no account of him as a mere rustic, because his rod, turned into a serpent, would inspire more terror than a thousand swords. As to what Moses says, that he himself fled from it in alarm, unquestionably God intended to affright his servant, that he might the better estimate from his own feelings what would be the power of God to terrify that proud king. This, then, was the object of the miracle, that there was no occasion for mighty armies, since Pharaoh would tremble at the sight of the simple rod; and that the rod need not be wielded and violently agitated, because it would inspire sufficient terror by its own movement and agitation. The one part of the miracle, where the rod returned to its former shape, was intended to shew Moses, that what was to be hostile and injurious to his enemy, would be an assistance and safeguard to himself. Therefore, the same rod which encouraged and emboldened Moses, depressed and overwhelmed his foe. But that he dares, in immediate obedience to the voice of God, to lay hold of the serpent, is a proof of his remarkable faith; and this appears more manifestly from his sudden change, that he fears not to provoke a poisonous and noxious animal, by taking hold of its tail, when he had so lately fled from its very sight in consternation. His timid mind, then, was capable of great courage, and his timidity and piety brought forth their fruit alternately. And this is especially worthy of remark, that Moses was strengthened by the pre-

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sence of God; but that he was weakened when he turned his eyes to the untameable minds of his own race, and to the proud tyranny of Egypt. The question now arises, whether the change of the rod into a serpent was real, and actual, or whether the outward form only was changed? Although I should be unwilling to contend pertinaciously for a thing of little consequence, I embrace that opinion which is more probable, that not merely an image or vision appeared, but that God, who created all things out of nothing, gave a new nature to the rod, and again made a rod out of the serpent, which was in no degree more difficult than to change Lot's wife into a pillar of salt. (Gen. xix. 26.) Since this was easy to God's power, it does not appear likely to me that He had recourse to the illusion of visions. As to the imitation of the magicians, we will speak of their sorceries in their proper place.

5. *That they may believe.* This spectacle, then, was not shewn to Moses once only, but the power was imparted to him also of frequently repeating the miracle; both to acquire credit from the Israelites, and to repress the audacity of Pharaoh. For although the sentence is incomplete, there is no ambiguity in the sense, viz., that Moses is armed with power from heaven to make his vocation sure, and that none may doubt him to be a Prophet divinely commissioned. It would be tedious here to dilate expressly on the use of miracles, suffice it briefly to lay down, that they sometimes serve as preparatives to faith, sometimes for its confirmation. We see an example of both in the metamorphosis of the rod, by which Moses was the more animated and encouraged to gather strength, although he already believed God's promise; but the Israelites, who were both incredulous and unteachable, were prepared and compelled to believe. Besides, the miracle opened a door of faith with the Israelites, that, being persuaded of his prophetical office, they might submit to be taught; whilst he was himself led on to greater assurance and perseverance. For although the Almighty begins further back, and refers to the adoption of the patriarchs, and this was calculated to lay the foundation of their hope of redemption, it still does not follow that they were prepared

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to receive Moses, until the authority of his ministry had been established. Wherefore, I have said, that their faith was commenced by the miracle.

6. *Put now thy hand into thy bosom.* By this sign Moses was instructed that what is in the greatest vigour withers away at once, at the command of God; and that what is dry is thus restored to its original vigour; in a word, the statement of Paul was confirmed by it, that God "calleth those things which be not, as though they were." (Rom. iv. 17.) It was, so to say, a kind of leprosy, when Moses was banished from the court into the land of Midian, where he led his flock through wild and rough places, among thorns and brambles. After he had passed forty years like one half-dead, having no dignity or name, he regained, as by a restoration, (*postliminio*) what he had lost. Therefore God now promises him that he would soon restore what He had taken away. This is the simple connection of the sign with its effect, with which sober readers will be content, without giving heed to the subtleties of others. For this was particularly needful to be understood, that all men stand or fall according to God's will; that when they seem most strong, their strength suddenly fails, and they waste away; and, again, as soon as God pleases, they return from their deformed and failing state to vigour and beauty. In this way the holy man learnt that, as he had lain in obscurity for a time, because he had been withdrawn, by God's hand, from the society of men, and had been cast into solitude, so he need not despair of becoming a different man by the same hand. This condition, too, in some measure, pertained to the whole body of the people; but because it better suits the person of Moses, it is preferable to retain this exposition; lest, only considering his present position, as a mean and humble shepherd, he should distrust his capacity for undertaking his office, and that he should expect dignity and boldness to be given him by God. Moreover, God did not mean to instruct Moses individually only, (as we have said,) but to raise him above the contempt of the people, that the exile by which his dignity had been marred, should not detract from his influence and authority; but, because the calling of God shone forth in

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him like a resurrection, that he should, at the same time, be invested with weight and reputation.

8. *And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe thee.* In these words God took away from Moses every handle for doubt; as much as to say, that he was sufficiently provided and strengthened to overcome the stubbornness of the people; and yet, heaping up the measure to overflowing, he afterwards added a third sign, from whence Moses might attain full confidence, and that no further hinderance should oppose his pious desires. This, too, is a remarkable evidence of the kindness of God, that he deigned so liberally to add sign to sign, and to contend with the evil heart of the people, until with a strong hand he drew them out of their torpor of incredulity. Surely, if they neglected the first miracle, they were unworthy to have another proof of his power set before them by God. It was, then, a wonderful exercise of long-suffering still to persevere in arresting their dulness. With equal clemency does He now overlook our sluggishness of heart; because, when with far less reverence than we ought we receive the testimonies whereby He manifests His grace, He avenges not our foul ingratitude, but rather adds new remedies for the cure of our unbelief. As by the two former miracles God shewed the power which he willed to exercise by the hand of Moses, so in this third He taught them what would be His dealings with the Egyptians. And then, both from within and from without, Moses was confirmed before all the people. The conclusion is, then, that when God should lift up His hand against the Egyptians, so far would they be from having strength to resist, that the very strongholds in which they proudly trusted should be felt to be adverse and injurious to them. We know how many and various were the advantages they derived from the Nile. Their land, on one side, was rendered, by its opposing barrier, safe and invincible; its many ports enriched their nation by their convenience for the importation and exportation of merchandise; the fertility of their fields arose from its inundations; in a word, Egypt attributed the chief part of its prosperity to the Nile. But now God gives warning not only that it should not profit the Egyptians, but that

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it was in His power to turn all its advantages into injuries; nay, that the very stream which used to fertilize their land by its irrigation, should cover and defile it with blood. With respect to the words, the "voice of the sign" is figuratively applied to mean a demonstration of the power of God, by which the Israelites might be taught that Moses was sent them by God as their deliverer. For although the rod turned into a serpent could not speak, yet very loudly, indeed, did it announce, that what the Israelites deemed altogether impossible, would not be difficult to God. Others thus resolve the particle אות,[1] "If they will not believe your voice, because of the sign;" but the former interpretation is more correct. The meaning of the expression, however, is added soon afterwards, in this distinction—"If they will not believe also these two signs, neither hearken unto thy voice;" as though God had said, that His power cried out, or thundered in His miracles, to obtain a hearing for the teaching of His servant.

10. And Moses said unto the Lord, O my Lord, I *am* not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant; but I *am* slow of speech, and of a slow tongue.

11. And the Lord said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the Lord?

12. Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say.

13. And he said, O my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand *of him whom* thou wilt send.

14. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses, and he said, *Is* not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee: and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart.

10. Tunc dixit Moses ad Jehovam, Obsecro Domine, ego non sum vir disertus, neque a die hesterno, neque nudius tertius, neque ex quo locutus es servo tuo: quoniam ore lento, et lingua lenta ego sum.

11. Respondit autem illi Jehova, Quis posuit os in homine? aut quis statuit mutum, vel surdum, aut videntem, vel cæcum? annon ego Jehova?

12. Nunc igitur proficiscere, et ego adero ori tuo, et te docebo quæ loquaris.

13. Et dixit, obsecro Domine, mitte per manum per quam mittes.

14. Et iratus est furor Jehovæ contra Mosen, et dixit, Annon Aharon fratrem tuum Levitam novi, quod loquendo loquuturus sit ipse? Atque etiam ecce egredietur in occursum tuum, et te aspiciens lætabitur in corde suo.

[1] אות the noun substantive translated a sign, and אות the particle indicating an accusative case, are the same word in Hebrew, if points are not used. Hence Calvin has called the אות here a particle, though avowedly commenting upon its purport as a noun.—*W.*

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15. And thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth: and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do.

16. And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be, *even* he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God.

17. And thou shalt take this rod in thine hand, wherewith thou shalt do signs.

15. Loqueris igitur ad eum, et pones verba in os ejus, et ego ero cum ore tuo, et cum ore ejus, et ostendam vobis quæ sitis facturi.

16. Et loquetur ipse pro te ad populum, eritque tibi pro ore, et tu eris illi pro Deo.

17. Et baculum hunc accipies in manu tua, ut facias per eum (*vel*, cum eo) signa.

10. *O my Lord.* Moses catches at every word of escape, so as to force himself from the task imposed on him, not that he desires to refuse the command, but because he trembles at its importance. It is this distrust of his own powers which makes him so hesitating and timid. The remedy was obvious, that he should assure himself, since he well knew that he was undertaking nothing rashly, that God, whose command he obeyed, would supply him with ample strength. In this, then, lay the fault, that he did not cast all his cares on God, and, setting aside his own weakness, hope against hope, like Abraham, who "considered not his own body now dead; neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb; being fully persuaded that what God had promised, he was able also to perform." (Rom. iv. 18, 19, 21.) It was an act of modesty in him to reflect on the defect which he mentioned, if he had but asked for succour from God; but when he proceeds further, and requests to be altogether discharged, he does an injustice to God, as if He would lay a greater burden on His servants than they could bear, or would give any inconsiderate command. This over-anxious caution is, therefore, deservedly condemned, although it may have some admixture of virtue; because whatever difficulty we encounter, this ought to be a sufficient encouragement to us, that as often as God chooses men as His ministers, although they are in themselves good for nothing, He forms and prepares them for their work. It is, indeed, lawful to fear in perplexities, provided that our anxiety overcomes not the desire to obey; but whatever God enjoins it is never right to refuse on any pretext. Moreover, we see that the instru-

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ments which seem but little suitable are especially employed by Him, in order that His power may more fully appear. He might, if He had chosen to use Moses as His ambassador, have made him eloquent from the womb; or, at least, when He sends him to his work, have corrected his stammering tongue. It seems a mockery, then, to give a commission of speaking to a stammerer; but in this way, (as I have said,) He causes His glory to shine forth more brightly, proving that He can do all things without extrinsic aid. Interpreters vary as to the meaning of the words. Some think that the clause "since thou hast spoken to thy servant" is added in amplification, as if the tongue of Moses began to be more slow than ever since the vision had appeared; but since the particle גַּם,[1] *gam*, is thrice repeated, I interpret it simply, that Moses had never been eloquent from his infancy, and that he was not now endued with any new eloquence.

11. *Who hath made man's mouth?* Here the cause is expressed, why the hesitation of Moses was worthy of reprehension; viz., because arrested by his own infirmity, he did not look up to God, who, being above the want of any human aid, easily accomplishes whatsoever He has decreed, and subduing all the obstacles which terrify men, obtains in any direction assistance according to His will. Moses objects his stammering as a cause for holding back; God replies, that it is He alone who governs the tongue which He has created; therefore, that if some be tongueless or dumb, and some quick and eloquent of speech, the difference is all of His good pleasure. Whence it follows that all nature (as it is called) is subject to his government, so that He easily finds means of the things that are not; and, on the other hand, removes far out of the way whatever impediments interpose, and even forces them into obedience. But He not only asserts his right and power of government in the general course of nature, but teaches that it is of His special grace alone that some exceed others in eloquence; and not only so, but that it is in His hand to make wonderful changes, so as to strike

[1] גַּם, properly *also*. Here rendered *since* in *A. V.*; the margin of which exhibits, otherwise, the Hebrew idiom with exactness.—*W.*

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the most eloquent dumb, and to fit the tongue of the dumb for speaking. And this experience also shews, that sometimes those who excel in readiness of speech, want words; and, on the contrary, that the stammering and slow of speech plead a single cause with admirable dexterity, although the power may be wanting to them in every other case. Since, then, it is in God's power to bind or to loose men's tongues at any moment, it was wrong of Moses to hesitate, as if in surprise, because he possessed not natural freedom of speech; as if it were not possible for the author of nature to remedy this disadvantage. But while it is good to magnify the immense power of God, in removing all the hinderances which oppose us, so must we beware of resting upon it indiscriminately, as though it were subject to our fancies. For we see men, whilst they too boldly undertake whatever their own lusts suggest, shielding themselves with this thought, that all means and events are in God's hands, so that nothing may stand in the way of their impetuosity. But the power of God is basely profaned by this rashness; and, therefore, this truth is not duly applied to its legitimate purpose, unless a vocation and command clearly invites us on. We must, then, mark the connection: Go, where I shall send thee. Am I not Jehovah, who gives to men speech, and sight, and hearing? the tendency of which is, that Moses, confidently trusting to the bounty of God, should devote himself earnestly to his work.

13. *Send, I pray thee, by the hand.* Those who interpret this passage as alluding to Christ,[1] as though Moses said, that His power was needed to accomplish so mighty a task, introduce a forced and far-fetched sense, which is contradicted by the context, for God would not have been so aroused to anger by such a prayer. I see not why others

[1] Cornelius a Lapide in loc. "Multi patres, ut S. Justinus, Tertull., Cyprian., Euseb., scribentes contra Judæos, et Rupert. putant Mosen hic petiisse adventum Messiæ; hujus enim nomen erat *missus* vel *mittendus*, &c. Hic sensus valde probabilis, et accommodatus est, quicquid objiciat Absolen. et audacter nimis tantis patribus obstrepat Eugubinus: ita enim olim alii patriarchæ in gravibus causis semper ad Christum promissum respiciebant, et ad eum suspirabant, ut patet de Jacob. Gen. xlix. 10, 18." The gloss in the Geneva Bible is, "*i.e.*, (by the hand or ministerie) of the Messias, or some other that is more meete than I."

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should suppose it to be spoken of Aaron;[1] for there is no weight in their conjecture, that Moses preferred his brother to himself. The third sense is more probable, viz., that God should stretch forth his hand to direct whomsoever he destined for the work. In that case, the relative must be in the masculine gender; but in order to avoid all ambiguity, I prefer the feminine, as I have translated it. (*Mitte per manum per quam.*) For there is no doubt but that Moses desires the task, too weighty and difficult for himself, to be transferred to some one else; just as if he had said—Since there are multitudes at hand whom thou mayest employ, choose whomsoever thou wilt of them, provided only it be some other, and that I be excused. There is an implied antithesis between Moses and others, in which he hints at his own natural disqualification, and says that others are endued with dexterity, industry, and activity; and thence he argues that it will be absurd that God should reject the hands which are adapted and ready for the work.

14. *And the anger of the Lord was kindled.* This passage confirms, by opposition, that expression, that there is no better sacrifice than to obey the voice of the Lord, (1 Sam. xv. 22,) since God is so grievously offended with the hesitation of Moses, in spite of his specious excuses. But nothing is more pleasing to God than to maintain the authority of his word, and that men should suffer themselves to be guided by this rein. God had pardoned His servant's slowness and unwillingness to the work; but beholding that he obstinately refused, He spares him no longer. Hence we are warned cautiously to beware, lest if God bear with us for a time, we give way to self-indulgence, as if we were permitted to abuse His patience with impunity. Still it is a mark of His fatherly kindness, that in His anger He contents Himself with reproof. As to His saying that he knew that Aaron would be his brother's interpreter, it is questionable whether He had intended from the beginning to employ him in this way, or whether He conceded thus much at length to the diffidence of Moses.

[1] "Quia *frater Aaron* suus erat eo senior, et eloquentior, eum desiderabat habere socium sibi a Domino assignandum."—*Nic. de Lyra Com. in loco.* So also *R. Sal. Jarchi.*

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It is indeed true, that God does nothing which He has not decreed by His secret providence before the creation of the world; yet sometimes second causes intervene why this or that should be done. Either view is probable,—either that God affirms Aaron to be already chosen by Him to be an assistant to Moses, or that He says He will grant this concession to the infirmity of Moses. The latter pleases me best, that Aaron should be added in anger as his brother's companion, and that part of the honour should be transferred to him; when Moses, by his own repugnance, had deprived himself of some of his dignity. But why is he called "the Levite," as if he were an unknown person? Some reply, that there were many among the Israelites of that name; but this simple solution satisfies me, that it was not any indifferent individual of the children of Israel who was promised to Moses as his companion, but his own brother; one who, by his close relationship, might exercise greater familiarity with him. Unless, perhaps, God looked forward to the future calling of the tribe of Levi; for he tells us, by the mouth of Malachi, that His covenant was with Levi, that his descendants should be the keepers of the law and of the truth, and the messengers of the Lord of hosts. (Mal. ii. 4-8.) Thus the sense would be very satisfactory, that God would restrain His wrath, and although aroused to anger by the refusal of Moses, he would still take an ambassador out of that tribe which he destined to the priesthood. Moreover, no slight confirmation is added, in that Aaron would come forth to meet his brother in the Desert, and would receive him with great joy. It was as much as to shew that whilst God was pressing forward His servant from the land of Midian with the one hand, He would stretch forth the other to draw him into Egypt. Though the vision ought to have quickened him to perform God's command, yet because it was necessary to stimulate his inactivity, Aaron was sent, as if God openly put forth His hand to excite him forward. For he had neither come into the Desert for pleasure, nor by chance, nor from vain curiosity; but Moses knew assuredly that a banner thus was set up for him by God, to shew him the certainty of his way. So by the coming of Ananias the

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vision seen by Paul was confirmed, and placed beyond the reach of doubt. (Acts ix. 17.) This was, indeed, extorted from God by the importunity of Moses. According to His infinite goodness He willed to elicit from the sin of His servant materials for His grace; just as He is accustomed to bring light out of darkness. (2 Cor. iv. 6.) God mentions his brother's gladness to Moses, in order to reprove his own indifference; as much as to say, Aaron will willingly come forth, and will receive you with joy and gladness; whilst you, depressed with sorrow and anxiety, or stupified by distrust, can scarcely be induced to stir a foot.

16. *And he shall be thy spokesman.* God destroys the pretext for his exemption, by assigning to his brother the office of spokesman, and yet does He not put the other in his place; nay, so merciful is the arrangement, that while He yields to His servant's prayer, He yet confers honour upon him in spite of himself. The offices are thus divided—Moses is to have the authority, Aaron is to be the interpreter. Thus Moses is set before his brother, from no respect to his own dignity; because the grace of God was to shine forth conspicuously in the head no less than in the members; as it is expressed in these words, that "Aaron should be instead of a mouth, and Moses instead of God;" *i.e.*, that he was to dictate what Aaron should faithfully report, and to prescribe what he should obediently follow. By this example did God bear witness that the gifts of the Spirit, as well as our vocations, are distributed by Him at His own good pleasure; and that none excels either in honour or in gifts, except according to the measure of His free bounty. But that the first-born is made subject to the younger, and is only appointed to be his spokesman, whereas God might have accomplished by his hand and labour, what he rather chose to perform by Moses; hence let us learn reverently to regard His judgments, because they are incomprehensible to us, and like a deep abyss. "To be instead of God" is the same as to lead or to direct, or to have the chief command; as the Chaldee Paraphrast[1] renders it, to be the chief or master. It is a very weak

[1] In the Targum of Onkelos, who has employed רב for the אלהים of the Hebrew.—*W.*

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calumny of the Arians to abuse this and similar passages, in order to refute the proofs of Christ's divinity, because there is a great difference in speaking of one as God simply and absolutely, and with circumstantial additions. For we know that the name of God is attributed to every potentate, improperly indeed, yet not unreasonably; as when the devil himself is called "the god of this world," (2 Cor. iv. 4;) but wherever mention is made of the true Deity, Scripture never profanes that sacred name.

17. *And thou shalt take this rod.* There is no doubt that God chose this shepherd's rod to be the instrument of his power, in order the more to confound the pride of Pharaoh. For what but shame and reproach could it bring to Moses, that he should bear with him the crook with which he had heretofore guided his sheep in their folds and hovels? This symbol, then, of a rustic and contemptible occupation, was opposed to the sceptre of Pharaoh, not without humiliation. In this respect, therefore, the obedience of Moses is worthy of praise, because he is not ashamed of a mean and humble appearance, but willingly carries his rod, and thus makes himself as nothing, and glorifies God. So is God usually wont to hide his treasures in earthen vessels, and to choose "the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty." But from Moses being commanded to work the miracles with the rod, we gather that outward signs are often made use of by God, when He works by His own hand; not to derogate at all from his power, or to obscure his praise, but to make it manifest that the whole world is subject to him, and that he freely applies to whatever use he pleases, things which are otherwise of no account.

18. And Moses went and returned to Jethro his father-in-law, and said unto him, Let me go, I pray thee, and return unto my brethren which *are* in Egypt, and see whether they be yet alive. And Jethro said to Moses, Go in peace.

19. And the Lord said unto Moses in Midian, Go, return into Egypt: for all the men are dead which sought thy life.

18. Profectus est ergo Moses, et reversus est ad Jethro socerum suum: et dixit ad eum, Vadam nunc, et revertar ad fratres meos qui sunt in Ægypto, ut videam an adhuc ipsi vivant. Et dixit Jethro Mosi, Vade in pace.

19. Dixerat autem Jehova ad Mosen in Midian, Vade, revertere in Ægyptum; quia mortui sunt omnes viri qui quærebant animam tuam.

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20. And Moses took his wife and his sons, and set them upon an ass, and he returned to the land of Egypt. And Moses took the rod of God in his hand.

21. And the Lord said unto Moses, When thou goest to return into Egypt, see *that* thou do all those wonders before Pharaoh which I have put in thine hand: but I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go.

22. And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord, Israel *is* my son, *even* my first-born.

23. And I say unto thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me: and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, *even* thy first-born.

20. Et accepit Moses uxorem suam, et filios suos, et sustulit eos super asinum: et reversus est in terram Ægypti. Et accepit Moses baculum Dei in manu sua.

21. Et ait Jehova ad Mosen, Quum profectus fueris, et reversus in Ægyptum, vide ut omnia signa quæ posui in manu tua, facias illa coram Pharaone. Ego autem constringam cor illius, et non dimittet populum.

22. Et dices Pharaoni, Sic dicit Jehova, Filius meus, primogenitus meus Israel.

23. Ego autem jussi te dimittere filium meum ut mihi serviret: et renuisti dimittere eum. Ideo ecce ego occidam filium tuum, primogenitum tuum.

18. *And Moses went.* It is surprising that Moses should have suppressed the vision whereby the mind of his father-in-law might have been most inclined to let him go; for he speaks merely of human feelings, that he desired to revisit his brethren and relations. Yet it must have been disagreeable to his father-in-law to lose his services, and that diligence and industry by which he had largely profited; nor could it have been pleasant to send away his daughter and grandchildren to a foreign country. Whether he was forbidden to do so by God, or whether he was silent from fear and shame, is uncertain; but I incline rather to this supposition, that he dared not speak of his vocation, lest its incredibility should cause him to be suspected of falsehood and vanity. Since, then, it would have been difficult to obtain belief as to his vocation, he preferred making a pretext of his natural affection. But Jethro being persuaded more by divine inspiration than by that excuse, was easily prevailed on; although I make no doubt that for forty years Moses had been giving such proofs of his honesty, that he was exempted from every evil suspicion. We know how much respect is gained by long experience; since, then, Moses had so long manifested his integrity, his father-in-law could have no fears of his levity, or fraud, or deceit. By this example believers

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learn ever to seek to obtain a good reputation; for there is nothing which so greatly facilitates the transaction of all affairs as the constant course of an upright and innocent life. For, from whence arises so much difficulty in obtaining what each may want from his neighbour? Whence such hinderances, such reproaches on one side and the other, but because, while every one would be believed, no one labours to obtain credit by his integrity? But although Moses had conciliated his father-in-law by his upright and holy life, still he was confirmed in his vocation by the readiness with which his demand was complied with, for the permission was full of courtesy and kindness without any sign of unwillingness or regret.

19. *And the Lord said*[1] *unto Moses.* Some connect this sentence with what follows, as if God had spoken to his servant after permission to return had been given him by his father-in-law; but my opinion rather is, that what had before been omitted is here inserted out of its place. Such repetition is frequent in the Scriptures.[2] Moses, therefore, adds to what he had already said, that the fear of danger was removed, since God had testified that the recollection of his having slain the Egyptian had ceased. For this would have been a stumblingblock at the very outset, if Moses had supposed that this accusation would have met him; not because his conscience smote him before God, but because he would have been rejected by the perverse judgments of men. Therefore, on this point, also, God provides against his fear, assuring him that the enemies were dead who had plotted against his life. And, perhaps, he now particularly notices this, because in asking for leave to depart, he could safely speak of it; for it is probable that Jethro, before he had married his daughter to an unknown foreigner, had demanded the cause of his exile; since it was easy to conjecture by his wandering in the Desert, that he had been expelled from his country. Having then confessed that he fled

[1] *Lat.*, "had said."

[2] "*And the Lord said unto Moses in Midian, i.e.*, at a different time from that when he appeared to him in the wilderness at Mount Sinai. Things are not always recorded in the sacred writings in the order in which they happened."—*Rosenmüller in loco.*

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from the wrath of the king, he now says that he is recalled by divine revelation, and that a safe return is promised him. Nor is he guilty of falsehood; for, amongst other things, God had promised him that no danger awaited him from his former enemies.

20. *And Moses took his wife.* By taking his wife and children with him, Moses clearly and freely professed, that he was returning to Egypt, to dwell there. The ass upon which he set them, is a plain proof how humble was his condition, and how slender his substance. For it is improbable that he left either money or silver vessels or precious garments with his father-in-law, so as to present himself to his people in poverty and nakedness. But as he had been content in the land of Midian with his indigence and coarse fare, he continues in the same simple estate; nor is he ashamed in his contemptible and common habit to mount the stage on which his poverty would be conspicuous, which in the Desert had been concealed. It is well known as a matter of experience, that the poor are led to crime more by the fear of shame than by hunger, cold, and other discomforts. Wherefore Moses withstood a very heavy temptation, when he cared not for being laughed at, and despised, and presented himself without any earthly splendour. But there is here an implied antithesis between "the rod of God" and the appearance of the humble and despised man, without any other equipment whatever; it is as much as to say, that it did not trouble him that he was without everything else, as long as he had the rod, which abundantly compensated for all deficiencies. Therefore, although he perceived that he would be exposed to the scorn of high and low, in leading the ass, burdened, as we have been observing, still he thought himself well, and more than well provided in his rod, the instrument of divine power, by which he should magnificently triumph, and could afford to dispense with the pomp of royalty. And surely the marks by which God would have his servants distinguished, deserve this honour, that we should require nothing to be added to their dignity. We must observe the epithet applied to the rod; it is called no longer the rod of Moses, but "the rod of God," because it is not

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used, as of old, to conduct his flock, but[1] to represent the power of God. For since it was by the sovereign power of God that it worked miracles, whatever concerned their glory is truly and properly ascribed to God. Elsewhere, indeed, it is called the rod of Moses; inasmuch as God communicates his own titles to the ministers chosen and created by himself, since he supplies them with the efficacy of his Spirit.

21. *When thou goest to return.* Moses had not previously enumerated the wonders; but from this verse we gather, that whatever we shall presently read to be done, was already commanded by God. There is then, no doubt, but that God had already advised him of his whole course of proceeding, lest he might yield to the obstinacy of the proud tyrant, and when two or three miracles had been wrought in vain, might cast away his rod, together with the charge committed to him. Now, therefore, God exhorts him to perseverance; and although he might perceive after three or four miracles that the obstinacy of the king was indomitable, still that he should not turn back, nor be discouraged, but should continue even unto the end. This, then, is the sum, that he should not faint nor fail, when he saw the inutility of his first efforts; nor cease to contend boldly till he had fulfilled all the objects of his vocation. Moreover, lest he might think it the effect of chance, that he did not immediately obtain the victory, or might consider it strange that the miracles should be eluded with impunity by a mere mortal, as if he stood before God unconquered in his boldness, God himself foretells that he would be the moderator of all this contest, nay, that whatsoever should seem to oppose the deliverance of his people would arise from his own secret counsel. Thus He shews Moses the reason why he should not stop until he had performed all the miracles; because the tyrant must be gloriously conquered, and overwhelmed in so many hard-fought engagements, that the victory might be more splendid. In the meantime He declares that the king of Egypt would not be thus obstinate contrary to His will; as if He could not reduce him to order in a moment; but rather that He would

[1] Pour estre lieutenant de Dieu.—*Fr.*

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harden his heart in order that He might violently overwhelm his madness.[1] The word which Moses uses signifies sometimes to apprehend, sometimes to restrain by force, sometimes to strengthen; but it seemed to me that I should best render its sense by the word "*constringo*," to constrain; since undoubtedly God would make it appear that he would be the President[2] (as it were) of all the contests in which Moses was to engage, so as even to control the heart of his adversary, and to harden it into obstinacy. Since the expression seems harsh to delicate ears, many soften it away, by turning the act into mere permission; as if there were no difference between doing and permitting to be done; or as if God would commend his passivity, and not rather his power. As to myself, I am certainly not ashamed of speaking as the Holy Spirit speaks, nor do I hesitate to believe what so often occurs in Scripture, that God gives the wicked over to a reprobate mind, gives them up to vile affections, blinds their minds and hardens their hearts. But they object, that in this way God would be made the author of sin; which would be a detestable impiety. I reply, that God is very far from the reach of blame, when he is said to exercise his judgments: wherefore, if blindness be a judgment of God, it ought not to be brought in accusation against him, that he inflicts punishment. But if the cause be often concealed from us, we should remember that God's judgments are not without reason called a "great deep," and, therefore, let us regard them with admiration and not with railing. But those who substitute his permission in the place of his act, not only deprive him of his authority as a judge, but in their repining, subject him to a weighty reproach, since they grant him no more of justice than their senses can understand.

22. *Israel is my son, even my first-born.* God thus refutes, by anticipation, the only pretext by which Pharaoh could justify his refusal to let the people go. For Jacob had spontaneously submitted himself and all his family to his government; he had then free power to retain the people,

[1] חזק. Constrinxit, revinxit; hinc roboravit, confirmavit; intransitivè etiam invaluit, prævaluit.—*Prof. J. Robertson. Clavis Pentateuch, in loco.*—*W.*

[2] Agonotheta.—*Lat.* Le maistre du camp.—*Fr.*

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which, by the common law of nations, was subject to the dominion of Egypt. But if it be an act of impiety to violate the ordinance instituted by God, the demand of Moses might appear improper, that the legitimate authority of the king should be abolished against his own will. For what was the object of proposing the departure of the people, except to compel the king to renounce his own authority? In order, then, to shew that he took nothing away unjustly or unreasonably from Pharaoh, God alleges the privilege by which the Israelites were excepted from ordinary laws; for by calling them His sons, He claims liberty for them; since it would be absurd that God himself, the supreme Ruler of heaven and earth, should be deprived of the sons whom He had deigned to adopt. He, therefore, indirectly compares his own paternal power with Pharaoh's earthly rule; because nothing could be less reasonable than that a mortal should refuse to yield to the Maker of himself and all the world. Still this is not applicable to all believers in general; as if it were wrong for them to be subject to kings, or as if their temporal subjection deprived them of their inheritance of the world; but mention is here only made of the special prerogative with which God had honoured the posterity of Abraham, when he gave them the dominion of the land of Canaan. Therefore, not content with the simple appellation of son, He calls Israel his first-born. By this honourable title He unquestionably prefers him to the other nations; as though He had said, that he was raised to the degree of the primogeniture, and was superior to all the world. This passage, then, may be accommodated to the calling of the Gentiles, whom God had already decreed to bring into fellowship with his elect people, so that, although they were younger, they might be united with his first-born. I allow, indeed, that all the race of Adam was then cast off; but, because Adam was made in the image of God, his posterity were always reckoned, in a certain sense, to be the children of God; for, whilst I readily admit that the holy offspring of Abraham are here compared with the nations who at that time were still heathen, and that in this respect they are called his first-born, because

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they are pre-eminent in dignity; still we must come to Christ, the only head, in order that the adoption should be sure. For we must hold fast to that statement of St. Paul, that the blessing of Abraham was not promised to his seeds, but to his seed; because not all that sprang from his flesh are accounted to be children, but those that were called; as Isaac, Ishmael being rejected, and as Jacob, Esau being passed by. (Gal. iii. 16; Rom. ix. 6.) But Christ is the root of our calling. Therefore, what in Hosea is spoken, as here, of the whole people, Matthew limits to Christ; and justly, since upon Him alone the grace of adoption is founded. (Hosea xi. 1; Matt. ii. 15.)

23. *And I say unto thee, Let my son go.* This was not the beginning of the legation, but its final clause; for Moses warned the desperate man of his son's death, when everything else had been tried in vain. The meaning is, then, that the obstinacy of the tyrant must not prevent Moses from pressing him even to this final act. Therefore this injunction was an exhortation to perseverance; as appears from the context, when God declares that he will punish the obstinacy of the tyrant, because he refused to obey the command to let the people go. Moreover, since this denunciation was very severe, and might very greatly awaken the tyrant's wrath, therefore Moses is thus early commanded to prepare himself lest he should fail in this particular.

24. And it came to pass by the way in the inn, that the Lord met him, and sought to kill him.

25. Then Zipporah took a sharp stone, and cut off the foreskin of her son, and cast *it* at his feet, and said, Surely a bloody husband *art* thou to me.

26. So he let him go: then she said, A bloody husband *thou art*, because of the circumcision.

27. And the Lord said to Aaron, Go into the wilderness to meet Moses. And he went, and met him in the mount of God, and kissed him.

28. And Moses told Aaron all the words of the Lord who had sent

24. Accidit autem in itinere, in hospitio, ut occurreret ei Jehova, et quæreret occidere eum.

25. Et tulit Sephora lapidem (*vel, gladium*) acutum, et amputavit præputium filii sui, et projecit ad pedes ejus: ac dixit, Certe sponsus sanguinum tu mihi es.

26. Et quum discederet ab illo, tunc illa dixit, Sponsus sanguinum ob circumcisionem.

27. Dixit autem Jehova ad Aharon, Vade in occursum Mosi in desertum. Profectus est igitur, et occurrit ei in monte Dei, et osculatus est eum.

28. Et indicavit Moses Aharoni omnia verba Jehovæ qui miserat

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him, and all the signs which he had commanded him.

29. And Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of the children of Israel.

30. And Aaron spake all the words which the Lord had spoken unto Moses, and did the signs in the sight of the people.

31. And the people believed: and when they heard that the Lord had visited the children of Israel, and that he had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped.

eum, et omnia signa quæ mandaverat ei.

29. Perrexit igitur Moses et Aharon: congregaveruntque omnes seniores filiorum Israel.

30. Et loquutus est Aharon omnia verba quæ loquutus fuerat Jehova ad Mosen, fecitque signa coram populo.

31. Et credidit populus: quia audierunt quod visitasset Jehova filios Israel, et quod respexisset afflictionem eorum: et se incurvando adoraverunt.

24. *And it came to pass by the way.* The expression, "the Lord met him," is here used in a bad sense, for an adverse meeting, or hostile encounter; as though Moses should say that the hand of the Lord was against him to interrupt his journey. In what form He appeared we know not, except that the words pretty plainly imply that Moses was assured of His anger, so as to be aware that his death was near. For had he not been instructed by revelation or by an angel, it would not have at all profited him to be shewn the impending danger. Nevertheless the cause is not expressed for which he perceived that God was so angry with him; except that we may gather it from what follows. For why should Zipporah have taken a sharp stone or knife and circumcised her son, had she not known that God was offended at his uncircumcision? Certain Rabbins, then, are unwise in their conjecture, that Moses had provoked God's vengeance on this occasion against himself, because he took his wife and children with him as being a useless charge, which would be likely to encumber him. They pronounce also, too boldly, on the nature of his scourge, viz., that he was afflicted by a severe disease, which endangered his life. Be it sufficient for us to know that he was terrified by the approach of certain destruction, and that, at the same time, the cause of his affliction was shewn him, so that he hastened to seek for a remedy. For, as we have just said, it would never have otherwise occurred to himself or his wife to circumcise the child to appease God's wrath; and it will appear a little further on, that God was, as it were, propitiated by this

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offering, since he withdrew his hand, and took away the tokens of his wrath. I therefore unhesitatingly conclude, that vengeance was declared against Moses for his negligence, which was connected with still heavier sins; for he had not omitted his son's circumcision from forgetfulness, or ignorance, or carelessness only, but because he was aware that it was disagreeable either to his wife or to his father-in-law. Therefore, lest his wife should quarrel with him, or his father-in-law trouble him, he preferred to gratify them than to give occasion for divisions, or enmity, or disturbance. In the meantime, however, for the sake of the favour of men he neglected to obey God. This false dealing was no light offence, since nothing is more intolerable than to defraud God of his due obedience, in order to please men. There was a mixture too of distrust and ingratitude in it; for, if the favour of God had had its due weight, he would have been withholden by no fear from this pious duty. Let us then learn from hence to use reverently the sacraments, which are the seals of God's grace, lest he should severely avenge our despisal of them; and at the same time we should remember that the external profession of piety, and the worship of God is a sacrifice so pleasant to God, that he will not allow us to omit the care of diligently testifying it as if it were a matter of small importance. Not that he cares for the ceremonies themselves, but because he would have honour paid to the pledges of his grace, in proportion to the benefit which is received from them. On this account Paul bears witness, that a pestilence raged among the Corinthians when the Lord's supper was profaned, (1 Cor. xi. 30;) because it was an act of impiety that so precious a treasure should be lightly esteemed. But it is worthy of observation, that whereas Moses had two sons with him, mention is here only made of one; from whence is deduced the probable conjecture that one of the two was circumcised. [1]Some think that Eliezer, the eldest, was not so, because Moses had not dared to con-

[1] The sense demands this translation, and the French Version confirms it; though the name is there omitted. As I presume there is no reason to doubt that Eliezer was the youngest, (compare Exod. xviii. 3, 4, with 1 Chron. xxiii. 15,) an accidental substitution of one name for the other must have probably been made.

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fess his religion so soon, and to awaken hatred on account of it. But I should rather imagine that when, in regard to one he had experienced the hostility of his family, he omitted it in the case of the second, to avoid the anger of his wife or his father-in-law; for if, in the lapse of time, he had attained more courage, he would not have hesitated to correct the former omission; but, worn out by domestic quarrels, he at last departed from his duty. By this example we are warned that we have daily need of God's help to support our strength, lest our courage should fail us, and our zeal should gradually grow cold or luke-warm; for Satan is constantly devising many temptations, by which he may either destroy or lessen our diligence. Therefore, whosoever desires to approve himself to God in the whole course of his life, must prepare the armour and the strength for enduring this contest; for if Moses was deficient in perseverance, we shall be equally, or even more liable to the same failure, unless the Lord uphold us by his Spirit.

25. *Then Zipporah took a sharp stone.* Because the wife here improperly assumed this office, some of the Rabbins conjecture that this was done in the absence of her husband; but the context contradicts them; and therefore I doubt not but that she seized hold of a knife or a stone hastily, as is common in times of fear and confusion. For fear had so affected her mind, that she did not act with consideration. Moses, too, might have lain incapable in his anxiety. Certainly the child was not duly circumcised; and still it is plain from the event, that the ceremony thus rashly performed pleased God; for it is immediately added, that "He let him go." For thus I interpret it, that the scourge of God ceased or was removed, because he was pacified by the repentance both of Moses and of Zipporah, although it was improper[1] in itself; not that imperfect obedience is pleasing to God absolutely, but relatively, through indulgence, it is sometimes approved. Thus punishment was remitted in the case of wicked Ahab, when for a season he was humbled, on account of his hypocritical tears. (1 Kings xxi. 29.) When, therefore, Zipporah, who had opposed her husband, circum-

[1] Præpostera.—*Lat.* Vicieuse.—*Fr.*

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cised her son with her own hands, although she had not yet seriously repented, yet God was contented with the suppression of her pride, so as to cease from afflicting Moses. Still we must not take this as an example, as if, by manifesting the signs of repentance, hypocrites would always find God merciful; but rather he sometimes graciously pardons the unworthy, as far as the infliction of punishment goes, that, by this kindness, he may invite us to true and sincere repentance. Let us conclude, then, that the confusion of Zipporah, and the stupor of Moses were pardoned; whilst she rashly hastened to circumcise her son, not out of presumption, but yielding to the fears of destruction threatened by God. Thus[1] their folly is confuted who wish to obtain a colour for baptism by women from this passage; for they contend that if infants be in danger of death, they may be properly baptized by women, because Zipporah circumcised her son. But they will themselves allow that, if a man be present, a woman could not lawfully administer this sacrament. It is a perversion, then, to lay down a rule from a confused and hasty act.

25. *And cast it at his feet.* The word נגע, *negang*, which some construe "she held," is more properly taken transitively. For although, in some degree, as necessity compelled, Zipporah submitted herself to God, yet, aroused to violent anger, she turns against her husband, and fiercely reproaches him with being "a bloody husband." Hence we perceive how far she was from a pious disposition to obey; since she thus furiously attacks her husband, and vents her wrath on him, on no other account but that God had extorted from her the circumcision of her son. Some think that she spoke this to her son, from an impulse of maternal grief or pity; but they wrest the words too violently; and it is better to keep to the natural meaning, viz., that she expostulated with her husband, because she had redeemed his life by the loss of her child's blood.

[1] The conduct of Zipporah on this occasion, as well as the argument founded on it for lay-baptism, is amply discussed by Calvin himself, in his Institutes, book iv. chap. xvi. 22.—*Calvin Soc. Transl.*, vol. iii. pp. 346, 347.

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27. *And the Lord said to Aaron.* When, from the long lapse of time, Aaron must have supposed that his brother had died in exile, he now receives the joyful announcement, from the mouth of God, that he is alive; and not only so, but he is excited with the hope of His special favour; for, although God does not explain in detail what he had decreed to do and prepared, yet, by his revelation, he promises him something unusual and unexpected. But the brevity of the command is remarkable, for God says not a word of the deliverance, but desires him to be the disciple of his younger brother; and although, by his promptitude, he manifested the greatest zeal and anxiety to obey, still he is not put on an equality with Moses, who is slow, and dubious, and vacillating, and almost supine; but he is commanded to learn of him the design of God. Only, lest he should question his own and his brother's vocation, he is instructed by a divine vision, that God is the author of the whole transaction, which serves as a recommendation of the verbal information he is to receive. For although Aaron was the messenger of God, and the organ of the Holy Spirit, we still see that he was not exempt from the usual condition to which we are subjected, of hearing God's word at the mouth of man. If, then, there are any who object to be taught by the medium of man's voice, they are not worthy of having God as their Teacher and Master; for it is soon after added, that Moses related all that was commanded him, as well as the great power which had been delegated to him of working miracles. But Aaron himself, although the elder, not only paid honour to his brother, whom he knew to be a Prophet of the Lord; but willingly submitted himself to him as to an angel. The kiss is mentioned as a sign of recognition, by which he testified the firmness of his faith.

29. *And Moses and Aaron went.* We are here briefly told how faithfully and religiously the two brothers executed the commands of God. They gather together the elders of the people, because the mighty multitude, as we are told they were, could not be collected in one place. Besides, God wished not to contend by means of the tumultuous and confused clamour of a mob, but with the miracles, which

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calmly breathed forth his divine power. But it is again worthy of observation, that Aaron is substituted to speak in the place of Moses. For if slowness of speech prevented Moses from doing so, why is not God's discourse directed to Aaron? Wherefore is this circuitous proceeding, that he promulgates to the people not what he himself heard directly, but received indirectly through his brother, except that this mode is agreeable to God for the purpose of proving their faith? For while by this proof the humility and modesty of Aaron were exhibited, since he objected not to depend on his brother's mouth, so also the tractableness of the elders appears in suffering the commands of God to be thus passed to them from hand to hand, and in not scrupulously inquiring why God did not directly address themselves, or thunder from on high. They were,[1] however, aided by the miracles, because they were so stupified by their miseries that otherwise simple preaching would have had no weight with them.

31. *And the people believed.* Either this is a *synecdoche*, a part of the people being put for the whole, or else Moses signifies that after the announcement was published, all with one consent embraced the message of their deliverance. I prefer the former meaning; because their solemn adoration is immediately subjoined, which could only have taken place in a public assembly. But we shall presently see how fickle and infirm was their belief. It is plain, from its levity and inconstancy, that it was without any living root. But it is not unusual that the word belief should be improperly applied to a mere assent and disposition to believe, which speedily passes away. Thus Christ (Mark iv. 15) speaks of the faith of many as transient. "The people," therefore, "believed," when they heard that their afflictions were regarded by God, since that statement carried with it credibility and authority; but it was such belief as might be dissipated by the first adverse wind; and so, indeed, it happened. This passage, then, teaches, that theirs is no great attainment, and that they are deserving of no great

[1] "Cependant Dieu ait suppleé à leur infirmité par l'aide des miracles;" still God helped their infirmity by the assistance of the miracles.—*Fr.*

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praise, who eagerly and joyfully receive what is propounded to them in God's name, unless faith, being deeply rooted in their hearts, sustains itself boldly against the assaults of temptation. Some connect the clauses differently,[1] "The people believed; and when they heard that assistance in their calamities awaited them, gave thanks to God." But the *copula* is here rightly resolved into the *expositive particle*, and the sense is—"When the people had heard what Aaron reported, they believed." God's visiting them here expresses the actual occurrence, viz., that God was willing to render them aid in their sore distress. Their "worshipping" was in token of their gratitude, because it was not enough for them privately and individually to reflect on the favour of God, unless they also openly manifested their religious feeling; not as if God greatly requires outward ceremonies, but because they are useful supports to our infirmity, and it is right, that not the mind only, but the body also, should be employed in the service of God.

CHAPTER FIFTH.

1. And afterwards Moses and Aaron went in, and told Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness.

1. Postea venerunt Moses et Aharon, et dixerunt Pharaoni: Sic dixit Jehova Deus Israel, Dimitte populum meum ut festum diem celebrent mihi in deserto.

2. And Pharaoh said, Who *is* the Lord, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go.

2. Et dixit Pharao, Quis est Jehova, ut obediam voci ejus dimittendo Israelem? Non novi Jehovam, atque etiam Israelem non dimittam.

3. And they said, The God of the Hebrews hath met with us: let us go, we pray thee, three days' journey into the desert, and sacrifice unto the Lord our God, lest he fall upon us with pestilence, or with the sword.

3. Tunc dixerunt, Deus Hebræorum occurrit nobis. Ergo eamus iter trium dierum in desertum, ut sacrificemus Jehovæ Deo nostro, ne forte irruat in nos pestis vel gladius.

4. And the king of Egypt said unto them, Wherefore do ye, Moses and Aaron, let the people from their works? get you unto your burdens.

4. Dixit ad eos rex Ægypti, Ut quid Moses et Aharon abstrahitis populum ab operibus suis? Ite ad labores vestros.

[1] As in *A. V.*; and this rendering is confirmed by *Dathe*, "Hi fidem habuerunt; et cum audirent," &c.

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5. And Pharaoh said, Behold, the people of the land now *are* many, and ye make them rest from their burdens.

5. Et dixit Pharao, En multi nunc populus terræ, et vos cessare facitis eos a laboribus suis.

1. *And afterwards Moses and Aaron went in.* Moses here begins to set forth how many and how great were the proofs of God's power displayed in the deliverance of his people. For, since the pride, the madness, and the obstinacy of the king were indomitable, every door was closed, until broken down miraculously, and by various means. It was, indeed, possible for God to overwhelm him at once, by a single nod, so that he should even fall down dead at the very sight of Moses; but, as we have already briefly stated, and he will himself presently declare, He, *in the first place,* chose more clearly to lay open His power; for if Pharaoh had either voluntarily yielded, or had been overcome without effort, the glory of the victory would not have been so illustrious. *In the second place,* He wished this monument to exist of His singular love towards His elect people; for by contending so perseveringly and so forcibly against the obstinacy of this most powerful king, He gave no doubtful proof of his love towards his Church. *In the third place,* He wished to accustom His servants in all ages to patience, lest they should faint in their minds, if He does not immediately answer their prayers, and, at every moment, relieve them from their distresses. *In the fourth place,* He wished to shew that, against all the strivings and devices of Satan, against the madness of the ungodly, and all worldly hinderances, His hand must always prevail; and to leave us no room to doubt, but that whatever we see opposing us will at length be overcome by him. *In the fifth place,* By detecting the illusions of Satan and the magicians, He would render His Church more wary, that she might carefully watch against such devices, and that her faith might continue invincible against all the machinations of error. *Finally,* He would convince Pharaoh and the Egyptians, that their folly was not to be excused by any pretence of ignorance; and, at the same time, by this example, He would shew us how horrible a darkness possesses the minds of the reprobate, when He has deprived them of the light of his Spirit. These things must be attentively

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observed in the course of the narrative, if we desire to profit by it.

Since it is difficult to obtain access to kings, who deign not to admit to their presence any of the lower orders, Moses and Aaron must have been endued with no ordinary confidence, when they boldly approached Pharaoh. For it was a disagreeable message, and one very likely to give offence, that he should permit the people to take three days' journey beyond the bounds of Egypt; since a suspicion must unquestionably arise that, being thus dismissed, they would no longer remain his subjects, and that thus a part of the land would be emptied of its inhabitants. Still Moses and Aaron do not fear to deliver God's command, in which there was this additional annoyance to the proud and sensitive ears of the king, viz., that they attributed the glory of Deity to the God of Israel alone; for, by calling Him Jehovah, they imply that the gods worshipped in Egypt were false, and invented by the imaginations of man. We have said elsewhere that there was no deceit in the pretext that God called his people into the wilderness to hold a feast, although He does not reveal His counsel to the tyrant; for it was really His pleasure that a sacrifice of thanksgiving should be offered to Himself on Mount Sinai, and that they should be thus separated from the polluted nation with which they were mixed up; and, assuredly, He wished to arouse the tyrant's wrath, by ignominiously condemning the whole of Egypt, as not capable of pure worship. For He was obliged by no law to declare openly their deliverance; but that He might draw forth from the mind of the tyrant the venom of his impiety, He asked for nothing connected with the advantage of His people, but merely demanded the worship which was due to Himself. The word which Moses uses means properly to hold a feast, but also embraces whatever is connected with it; and, therefore, by *synecdoche*, it is taken here, as also in other passages, for the solemn worship of God.[1]

2. *And Pharaoh said, Who is the Lord?* It is scarcely

[1] Nam *festum celebrare* sacrificium complectitur.—*Vatablus in Pol. Syn.*

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credible that there should be such madness in a mortal as, by thus wantonly scorning God, to fly, as it were, in the face of heaven![1] But we must observe, that the tyrant being devoted to idolatries, thus insulted the God of Israel, that he might manifest his great piety towards his false gods. For his mockery, in scornfully bandying back the name of Jehovah, must be referred to the words of Moses, as much as to say, Why do you bring against me this unknown phantom under the title of the eternal God, as though we had no god of our own? Thus Pilate, when Christ said, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth," asks ironically, and not without mockery, "What is truth?"[2] (John xviii. 37, 38.) In short, Pharaoh did not conceive himself to be dishonouring the Deity, when he rejected this false (*prodigiosum*) God, as he thought. Yet his error did not avail to justify him, since it arose from insane audacity and contempt of God. Admit that he was unwilling that any should depreciate his idols, and that he thus imagined himself to perform a religious duty; still it was an act of very gross impiety, so carelessly to repudiate the name of the true God, and even to assail it with mockery. We may remark a like madness in all idolaters. Being intoxicated by their errors they boldly mock at God, and deign not to make inquiries about Him. The cry of the Papists now-a-days is, that we are imposing a new God on the world; and, applauding themselves in their wildest ravings, they do not hesitate to condemn our whole doctrine as impious; not because they are persuaded that they are themselves worshipping God aright; but they are wilfully blind, that they may elude, with impunity, the sacred majesty of God, and stupify their consciences, and preserve to themselves their death-like slumber. They seem to themselves to be sharp-witted and facetious, when they are scoffing at the novelty of our doctrine; though its truth would be plain enough, if they would only open their eyes. The Epicureans, too, (of

[1] Quasi in cœlum conspueret.—*Lat.*

[2] Comme s'il disoit, Penses tu que je soye un petit enfant, pour ne discerner point entre le blanc et le noir? as much as to say, Do you think I am a little child unable to distinguish black from white?—*Fr.*

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which pestilent sect the world is now full,) although they foam and rage against God, still invariably take refuge in some cloud, under which their detestable madness may be concealed: for they pretend that amidst such a multitude of opinions, it is scarcely possible to discern who is God, or what He commands. Still, however, this is their constant object, viz., that they may have nothing to do with God, and yet may conceal by jests the shame of their impiety; as if it were free for them to reject what they are wilfully ignorant of. But after Pharaoh had indirectly derided the message of Moses, as a ludicrous affair, he more openly and more contemptuously vents his pride, implying that he cares not for that God, with whose name Moses and Aaron would frighten him.

3. *And they said, The God of the Hebrews.* Moses and Aaron proceed with their message; neither does the pride of the tyrant decrease or weaken their courage in proclaiming the glory of the One true God, who had peculiarly attached Himself to them. And, certainly, this is the attribute of faith, to trample upon everything that exalteth itself on earth; since the truth of God is superior to all human greatness. Nor could they more effectually refute that profane and impious word, "I know not the Lord," than by again asseverating that the true God is the Protector of their nation, and that this had been disclosed to them in an open manifestation of Himself. The threatening, which they added, admonishes Pharaoh that his rebellion would not be unpunished, if he kept back the people from the worship of God; for if He would take vengeance on the people which was retained against their will, how could *he* escape with impunity, who professedly entered into contention with God? When, then, they declare that some calamity would befall them unless they obeyed the call of God, they intimate that Pharaoh must beware of some greater visitation.

4. *And the king of Egypt said unto them.* It is surprising that the king, in the excess of his arrogance, did not more cruelly entreat these servants of God, whom he accounted the ringleaders of sedition. But he was undoubtedly

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restrained by God from proceeding at once to destroy them. By his pertinacity in resisting their departure, he will more clearly shew by and bye how important to his interests he considered it that the people should remain in Egypt; how comes it then that he is contented with verbal reproof, and refrains from shedding their blood, if it were not that God protected his servants under the shield of His defence? He harshly reproves them, indeed, and condemns them to the same labours, by which the rest of the people were oppressed; but since it is notorious that moderate rigour never satisfies tyrants, we conclude that they were preserved under the guardianship of God, and would otherwise have died a hundred times over. But let us learn from his accusation against them, as the promoters of rebellion, to bear patiently, after their example, calumnies and false imputations; only, in reliance on God's command, let us be fully conscious that we are unjustly accused. The next verse, wherein he says, that "the people of the land are now many," is intended to aggravate their guilt; both because they would inflict a deeper injury on the public, than as if they had withheld a few from their work; and also, because, by inflaming a large number of people, they would bring greater danger on the country.

6. And Pharaoh commanded the same day the taskmasters of the people, and their officers, saying,

7. Ye shall no more give the people straw to make brick, as heretofore: let them go and gather straw for themselves.

8. And the tale of the bricks, which they did make heretofore, ye shall lay upon them; ye shall not diminish *ought* thereof: for they *be* idle; therefore they cry, saying, Let us go *and* sacrifice to our God.

9. Let there more work be laid upon the men, that they may labour therein; and let them not regard vain words.

10. And the taskmasters of the people went out, and their officers, and they spake to the people, saying, Thus saith Pharaoh, I will not give you straw.

6. Et præcepit die illo Pharao exactoribus qui erant in populo et præfectis ejus, dicens,

7. Non continuabitis in danda palea populo ad conficiendos lateres, sicut heri et nudiustertius, sed ipsi eant, et colligant sibi paleas.

8. Summam vero laterum quam ipsi fecerunt heri et nudiustertius, imponite eis: non minuetis ex ea: nam quia otio remissi sunt, propterea ipsi clamant, dicentes, Eamus, sacrificemus Deo nostro.

9. Aggravetur ergo servitus super viros, in quo se exerceant, et non attendant verbis mendacibus.

10. Tunc egressi sunt exactores populi et præfecti ejus, et dixerunt populo, Sic dicit Pharao, Ego non do vobis paleas.

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11. Go ye, get you straw where ye can find it: yet not ought of your work shall be diminished.

12. So the people were scattered abroad throughout all the land of Egypt to gather stubble instead of straw.

13. And the taskmasters hasted *them*, saying, Fulfil your works, *your* daily tasks, as when there was straw.

14. And the officers of the children of Israel, which Pharaoh's taskmasters had set over them, were beaten, *and* demanded, Wherefore have you not fulfilled your task in making brick both yesterday and to-day, as heretofore?

15. Then the officers of the children of Israel came and cried unto Pharaoh, saying, Wherefore dealest thou thus with thy servants?

16. There is no straw given unto thy servants, and they say to us, Make brick: and, behold, thy servants *are* beaten; but the fault *is* in thine own people.

17. But he said, Ye *are* idle, *ye are* idle; therefore ye say, Let us go *and* do sacrifice to the Lord.

18. Go therefore now *and* work: for there shall no straw be given you, yet shall ye deliver the tale of bricks.

11. Vos ite colligite vobis paleas, ubicunque inveneritis: quia non est imminutum quicquam ex opere vestro.

12. Dispersus est ergo populus per totam terram Ægypti, ut colligerent stipulas pro paleis.

13. Et urgebant eos exactores, dicendo, Perficite opera vestra, pensum diei die suo perinde ac si adessent paleæ, (*vel*, sicuti quum erant paleæ.)

14. Et cæsi sunt præfecti filiorum Israel, quos constituerant super ipsos exactores Pharaonis, dicendo, Quare non absolvistis pensum vestrum in lateribus conficiendis, sicut heri et nudiustertius, sicut antea ita hodie?

15. Et venerunt præfecti filiorum Israel, et conquesti sunt apud Pharaonem dicentes, Cur sic agis cum servis tuis?

16. Palea non datur servis tuis, et dicunt nobis, Lateres facite: et ecce, servi tui percutiuntur, et improbe agitur cum populo tuo.

17. Qui ait, Vos otio remissi estis, otio remissi: ideo dicitis, eamus, sacrificemus Jehovæ.

18. Nunc igitur ite, operamini: et paleæ non dabuntur vobis, et summam laterum reddetis.

6. *And Pharaoh commanded.* We shall more clearly perceive, as the narrative proceeds, that these taskmasters and officers were taken from amongst the children of Israel, although we have before read that some were Egyptians. But, as tyrants are ingenious in securing their own interests, Pharaoh in his subtlety wished to provide that none should escape, but that all alike should be brought in turn to the labour. For some, in such a multitude, might have evaded the Egyptians; but, when the charge was given to the Israelites, their familiar knowledge would prevent any from escaping. Besides, it is probable that with these taskmasters was deposited the straw, which they distributed either to parties of ten, or to individuals; he therefore doubles the

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work in this way, by commanding them to gather the straw with which the bricks were made. But, according to the proverb, that "the edicts of kings are monosyllables," Moses shews the vehemence of the tyranny by the brevity of the command. But this passage teaches us, that when God has begun to regard us for the purpose of relieving our troubles, He sometimes takes occasion to increase the pressure of our burdens. Thus, when God had engaged to be the deliverer of the Israelites, their trouble became greater, by the tyrant adding to their ordinary tasks that of gathering the straw for themselves. For thus it pleases God to prove the faith of His people; and thus is it expedient to lift up to Him their minds, which are too much set on earth, whilst they do not immediately perceive the fruit of the grace promised to them, nay, whilst they feel that nothing else is brought them by God's favour, except that their condition becomes worse. It is very useful for us to ponder this, that we may more patiently and calmly bear to be excited to the love and desire of heavenly blessings, by crosses and adversities. Now-a-days the Gospel procures hatred for many, deprives others of their pleasures, degrades others from their honours, brings to others the loss of their goods, sentences others to prison, others to exile, and endangers the life of some; in a word, the more God exerts His power, the more is Satan's rage excited on the other side, and the wicked become more fiercely cruel. This offence would greatly shake us, unless we knew, from the admonition of this example, that the inestimable grace, which is offered us in Christ, ought to be so valued by us, that in comparison with it, riches, honours, and all that men seek after, should be accounted nothing; and that we should find no difficulty in despising inconveniences of whatever kind.

9. *Let there more work be laid upon the men.* Although Pharaoh knew that he was cruelly entreating the unhappy Israelites, who ought, as strangers, to be hospitably and kindly received, yet he says that they were abusing their idleness, and were revolting because he indulged them too much. Thus, when tyranny has lost all regard for justice, there are no bounds to its harshness; and so far from being

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moved to pity by complaints, they only aggravate its cruelty. And these are the means by which its flatterers inflame it more, viz., that its subjects will never be quiet unless they faint under the weight of their burdens; that this is the best receipt for governing them, so to oppress them that they dare not open their mouths; if they cry, or murmur, that they should be oppressed the more,[1] till they grow hardened, and, as it were, callous to their bondage. They, therefore, relax not their contumelies and cruelties until the wretched people have altogether succumbed. Pharaoh insults them still more wantonly, when he says that he imposes heavier burdens upon them, that "they may not regard vain words." But what are these, except that they ask permission to worship God? His impiety, therefore, bursts forth in the midst of his tyrannical insolence; nor does he only mean to utter a blasphemy against God, but he is instigated by the wiles of Satan to undermine the faith of the Church. By a similar impulse, Rabshakeh proclaimed that Hezekiah deceived the people by "vain words," when he bade them trust in the living God. (Isaiah xxxvi. 5, 7.) Nor does Satan cease to employ the same machination against the faithful, as if all that God promises was deceit and vanity.

12. *So the people were scattered abroad.* This circumstance proves how bitterly they were afflicted, and what labour beyond their strength was imposed upon them. In order to make bricks, at least, they should have remained in a particular spot, but straw is not supplied to them for the purpose; they are obliged, therefore, to disperse here and there, and to gather stubble instead of straw in the distant parts of Egypt. They could not do both; it was then in fact just to procure a false pretext, which he might catch at as the ground of their condemnation: as now we often see the enemies of Christ inventing the most insupportable torments, by which the unhappy Church may be driven to

[1] The original here is, "ut obdurescant ad servitutem, quasi contracto collo;" which the French translates "pour l'endurcir à servitude, comme si on le trainoit par le col." The Geneva edition of 1617, as well as that of Amsterdam of 1671, however, have substituted "callo," which certainly seems to make the sense clearer.

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deny the faith. For it was the design of Pharaoh to drive Moses and Aaron far away, that they might never agitate any more for the departure of the people; and if he had obtained this wish, he would doubtless have remitted some part of his abominable cruelty; but, because they did not cease, he wished to extort from the people by bitter sufferings, that they should send them away themselves, or refuse even to lend an ear to the commands of God. For although he must have been perfectly conscious that there was no reason to accuse the people of idleness, but that the tale of bricks was not delivered, because the poor wretches, who had been hardly able before to perform half their labour, were now incapable, by the utmost exertion, to bear their burdens, and therefore sees that they are altogether overwhelmed by them; yet still he reproaches them with revelling in idleness, in order that they may turn away from Moses, and renounce and abandon the hope presented to them from on high. And, because he can only torment them more by killing them outright, he commands their officers to be beaten, that by their punishment the whole people might be in greater dread. Finally, those whom he saw standing too firmly, he determined to drive at last to despair. He is deaf to every excuse of the officers; for when he had once made up his mind to crush the people until he had destroyed in them all recollection of God, there is no more feeling or pity in him than in a stone.

19. And the officers of the children of Israel did see *that* they *were* in evil *case*, after it was said, Ye shall not minish *ought* from your bricks of your daily task.

20. And they met Moses and Aaron, who stood in the way, as they came forth from Pharaoh:

21. And they said unto them, The Lord look upon you, and judge; because ye have made our savour to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to slay us.

22. And Moses returned unto the Lord, and said, Lord, wherefore hast thou *so* evil-entreated this people? why *is* it *that* thou hast sent me?

19. Et viderunt præfecti filiorum Israel ipsos in miseria, dicendo, Non minuetis ex lateribus vestris opus diei die suo.

20. Et occurrerunt Mosi et Aharoni, qui stabant in occursum eorum quum ipsi egrederentur a Pharaone.

21. Dixeruntque ad eos, Videat Iehova super vos, et judicet, qui fœtere fecistis odorem nostrum in oculis Pharaonis et in oculis servorum ejus, tradendo gladium in manum illorum ad occidendum nos.

22. Tunc reversus est Moses ad Iehovam, et dixit, Domine, cur malum intulisti populo huic? cur misisti me? Nam ex quo veni ad Pharao-

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23. For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in thy name, he hath done evil to this people; neither hast thou delivered thy people at all.

nem ut loquerer in nomine tuo, malo affecit populum hunc: nec liberando liberasti populum tuum.

19. *And the officers of the children of Israel did see.* Some take the Hebrew word רַע,[1] *rang*, for "grief," but refer it to the people; as though it were said, "the officers did see the people sorrowful, when they informed them of the command of the king." But the simpler sense, in my opinion, will be, that they saw no remedy for their evil case, and that they could not be delivered from the cruel bondage in which they were. Some also explain it, that the officers themselves felt, from their own experience, after they had been so inhumanly repulsed by the king, how unhappy was their condition. But if I must choose either meaning, I should prefer what I have above stated, that they themselves sympathized with the public calamity, whilst they could see no hope of deliverance. Unless, perhaps, it would be better thus to take it,—that, when they came into the people's presence, they were themselves of sad countenance, and looked upon them with looks cast down by sorrow and shame, because they brought the cruel edict for doubling their labour. And certainly I willingly embrace this meaning, that when they were forced to promulgate the command of the king, their countenances betrayed their sorrow, because they could not evade the necessity of being the ministers of his ungodly tyranny and cruelty. For Moses adds immediately after, that they delivered the edict. Hence, then, their mournful aspect, because they unwillingly oppressed their brethren, whose troubles they would have preferred to lighten. The sum of the matter is, that their case was altogether desperate; because the officers themselves conveyed this message of the unchangeable cruelty of the tyrant, and by the agitation of their countenances bore witness that no mitigation could be hoped for.

[1] רַע, evil; *A. V.*, they (were) in evil (case.) The question for translators has been whether the pronoun in this clause may be rendered *themselves*. *S. M.* has said, *cum mœrore*; Hebraice cum malo, scilicet aspectu. Alii exponunt hic אותם pro נפשם, ut est sensus, viderunt præfecti Israelitorum se esse in magno mœrore. The LXX. and the *V.* have rendered the pronoun by words equivalent to *themselves*.—*W.*

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20. *And they met Moses.* Some translate it,[1] "they met together with Moses," taking the particle את, *eth*, for "together with;" but it is more in accordance with the context that the officers and some part of the elders or people encountered Moses and Aaron as they returned from Pharaoh. An accidental meeting is indicated, from whence it arose that their minds were still more exasperated against the Lord's servants. That blind grief is here described which, with a fury akin to madness, aroused the Israelites to unfounded anger against the innocent, who had deserved nothing of the kind. It is not indeed wonderful that they were so brutalized by the weight of their sorrows as to lose all sense of justice, and were even so completely driven out of their minds, as unreasonably to vent their indignation against the ministers of their deliverance; for this not unfrequently happens; but although it may be too common a fault, yet are not they free from the accusation of ingratitude who are carried away thus inconsiderately by the force of their passions; nay, we should learn from this example how carefully we ought to restrain our grief, which, if indulged, parts company both with reason and with kindness. For what could be more unjust than because Pharaoh is tyrannical and cruel to lay the blame on Moses and Aaron? But this outbreak arose from want of faith; because they measure the favour of God by their immediate success. They had lately thanked God for their promised redemption; now, as if they had been deceived, they accuse Moses and Aaron. Hence we gather how wavering was their faith, which vanishes at once upon so slight a cause. If the calling of Moses had not been ratified by miracles, they might have taken occasion to be angry from their ill success; but now, when they had experimentally known that God was the author of the whole proceeding, it is an act of perversity and falsehood to accuse Moses of rashness; and thus they do injustice not only to a mortal man, but to God their deliverer—an injustice which is doubled by the blasphemous abuse of His name, when they speak of Him as the promoter of a bad

[1] In saying "some translate," *C.* is again adverting to *S. M.*, but has rather chosen, with our *A. V.*, to follow the LXX. and Vulgate.—*W.*

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cause. For the expression, "the Lord—judge," is, as it were, to impose upon Him the law by which He must condemn Himself. On this account intemperate grief is still more to be watched against, which, whilst it bursts out immoderately against men, does not even spare God. They did not indeed think that they were reproaching God and rejecting His loving-kindness; for the excess of their passion had transported them out of themselves. Meantime we must mark the source of the evil, namely, that they were impatient, because God did not immediately complete what He had promised, but deferred it for a time; and again, because they sought to be exempted from every evil. Thus they preferred rotting, as it were, in their miseries, to suffering some little inconvenience for the hope of the favour of God. And this cowardice is natural to almost all of us, that we prefer to be without God's help rather than to suffer under the cross, whilst He leads us to salvation gradually, and sometimes by a circuitous path. Nothing indeed is sweeter than to hear that our afflictions are regarded by God, and that He will come to our relief in tribulation; but if God's favour awakens the wrath of the ungodly against us, we shall be prepared to abandon all His promises rather than purchase the hopes they afford at so great a price. In the meantime, we see how kindly God contended with the intemperate and corrupt conduct of His people. For certainly by reproaching Moses and Aaron so rudely, the Israelites rejected (as far as in them lay) that message respecting their deliverance which they at first had greedily received; and yet He ceased not to carry on His work even to the end.

22. *And Moses returned.* This return unto the Lord is here used in a bad sense for forsaking his office; for Moses is not related to have either calmly prayed, or, as in a difficult emergency, to have humbly sought counsel of the Lord; but, leaving the men with whom he had to do, to have gone back in disgust to God, to demand his dismissal. He returned, then, to God, that the whole undertaking might be abandoned, as though he had never been sent. This is what the words convey, since he openly expostulates with God, because He had permitted His people to be more cruelly en-

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treated, though He had promised them deliverance. At first sight, his madness would seem to be greater than that of the whole people, because he directly and openly accuses God as the author of all the evil which Pharaoh had inflicted; yet I doubt not but that he rather sorrowfully recounted the complaints of the people than spoke his own sentiments. Still his bitterness is not altogether excusable, when he repents of his vocation, and is indignant, because an unsuccessful charge had been intrusted to him. But when he accuses the slackness of God in redeeming His people, it is made apparent how deep is the darkness which had taken possession of his mind. He had been forewarned in good time of the hardness of Pharaoh's heart; he had heard that he would not yield until crushed by God's mighty hand; now, forgetful of all, he marvels that their redemption is not complete. The same thing often occurs to us, that the doctrine of faith and hope, which in peaceful times shines brightly in our hearts and echoes from our tongue, is altogether lost when we come to serious conflict. Wherefore we ought to devote ourselves with greater goodwill to its study, that even in the most trying circumstances the recollection of it may be our support.

CHAPTER SIXTH.

1. Then the Lord said unto Moses, Now shalt thou see what I will do to Pharaoh: for with a strong hand shall he let them go, and with a strong hand shall he drive them out of his land.

1. Et dixit Jehova ad Mosen, Nunc videbis quod facturus sum Pharaoni: quia in manu robusta dimittet eos, in manu *inquam* robusta ejiciet eos e terra sua.

2. And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I *am* the Lord:

2. Et loquutus est Deus ad Mosen, dixitque illi, Ego Jehova.

3. And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by *the name of* God Almighty; but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them.

3. Apparui quidem Abrahæ, Isaac, et Jacob in Deo omnipotente: in nomine tamen meo Jehova non sum cognitus illis.

4. And I have also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers.

4. Atque etiam erexi pactum meum cum illis, ut darem illis terram Chanaan, terram peregrinationum eorum, in qua peregrinati sunt.

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5. And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage; and I have remembered my covenant.

6. Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I *am* the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage; and I will redeem you with a stretched-out arm, and with great judgments.

7. And I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God; and ye shall know that I *am* the Lord your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.

8. And I will bring you in unto the land concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it you for an heritage: I *am* the Lord.

5. Ideoque ego audivi gemitum filiorum Israel, quos Ægyptii serviliter opprimunt: et recordatus sum fœderis mei.

6. Propterea dic filiis Israel, Ego Jehova, et educam vos ex oneribus Ægypti, et eruam vos e servitute illorum, et redimam vos in brachio extento, et in judiciis magnis.

7. Et assumam vos mihi in populum, et ero vobis in Deum, et scietis quod ego sum Jehova Deus vester, dum vos educo ex oneribus Ægypti.

8. Et introducam vos in terram, de qua levavi manum meam ut darem eam Abrahæ, Isaac, et Jacob: daboque eam vobis in possessionem. Ego Jehova.

1. *Then the Lord said unto Moses.* Moses was indeed unworthy of receiving so kind and gentle a reply from God; but the Father of all goodness of His infinite mercy pardoned both the sins of Moses and of the people, that He might effect the deliverance which He had determined. Yet He adduces nothing new, but repeats and confirms His former declaration, that Pharaoh would not obey until forcibly compelled to do so. The expression, "thou shalt see," is a tacit reproof of his immoderate impatience, in not waiting for the result of the promise. The reason is then added why God is unwilling that His people should be spontaneously dismissed by the tyrant, viz., because He wished the work of their liberation to be conspicuous. We must remark the strength of the words "drive them out;" as if He had said, that when Pharaoh had been subdued, and routed in the contest, he would not only consent, but would consider it a great blessing, for the people to depart as quickly as possible. The sum is, that he, who to-day refuses to let you depart, will not only set you free, but will even expel you from his kingdom.

2. *And God spake.* God pursues His address, that Moses may again uplift the fainting courage of the people. More-

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over, He rebukes their distrust, by recalling the memory of His covenant; for if this had been duly impressed upon their minds, they would have been much more firm in their expectation of deliverance. He therefore shews that He has now advanced nothing new; since they had heard long ago from the Patriarchs that they were chosen by God as His peculiar people, and had almost imbibed from their mother's breasts the doctrine of His adoption of them. Wherefore their stupidity is the more unpardonable, and more manifest, when they thus factiously complain of Moses, as if he had himself invented what he had promised them in the name of God. He also stings them by an implied comparison; Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had eagerly embraced the promise given them, and had quietly, and perseveringly trusted in it; whilst they, who boasted of their descent from that holy stock, disdainfully rejected it, because its fulfilment did not immediately appear. And, in order to amplify their sin, he reasons from the less to the greater: since a fuller and clearer manifestation of it is presented to them than there had been to the fathers, it follows that they ought to have been more ready to believe it. Whence it is plain that their stupidity is inexcusable, since they will not receive God, when he is so familiarly presenting himself to them. Translators do not agree as to the epithet "Sadai." Some derive it from the word שָׁדַד, *shadad*, and imagine that the final letter י, *yod*, is the double ד, *daleth*. If we agree to this, it will mean the same as "the Destroyer;" or at any rate will signify the awful majesty of God. Others are rather of opinion that the root is שַׁד, *shad*, which means "a teat." To others it appears to be a compound word from the relative אֲשֶׁר, *esher*, or שׁ, and דַּי, *di*, which in Hebrew means "sufficiency." Thus he will be called "Sadai," who abounds with all good things. It is indeed sure that they use this word in a good as well as a bad sense; for where Isaiah threatens that God will be the avenger of sins, he calls him "Sadai." (Is. xiii. 9.) So also in Job xxiii. 16, "Sadai troubleth me." In these and similar passages, the terrible power of God is unquestionably expressed; but when He promises to Abraham that He will be the God "Sadai," He

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is engaging himself to be merciful and bounteous. Here again, where He says that He appeared to the Fathers as the God "Sadai," He has not respect so much to His might in exercising judgment, as to His abundant and perfect loving-kindness; as though He had said, that He had manifested to Abraham and the other Patriarchs how great was His efficiency in preserving and defending His own people, and that they had known from experience how powerfully and effectually He cherishes, sustains, and aids them that are His. But although He declares what benefits He conferred upon them, He says that He was not known to them by His name "Jehovah;" signifying thus that He now more brightly manifested the glory of His divinity to their descendants. It would be tedious to recount the various opinions as to the name "Jehovah." It is certainly a foul superstition of the Jews that they dare not speak, or write it, but substitute the name "Adonai;" nor do I any more approve of their teaching, who say that it is *ineffable*, because it is not written according to grammatical rule. Without controversy, it is derived from the word הָיָה, *hayah*, or הָוָה, *havah*, and therefore it is rightly said by learned commentators to be the essential name of God, whereas others are, as it were, epithets. Since, then, nothing is more peculiar to God than eternity, He is called Jehovah, because He has existence from Himself, and sustains all things by His secret inspiration. Nor do I agree with the grammarians, who will not have it pronounced, because its inflection is irregular; because its etymology, of which all confess that God is the author, is more to me than an hundred rules. [1]Nor does

[1] "*A. Pfeiffer* in his *Dubia vexata*, rightly observes upon this passage. The name Jehovah was not, strictly and literally, unknown to the fathers, but it was so, in respect of the perfect fulfilment of the promises implied in it; more especially, that glorious one of the deliverance out of Egypt." —*Rosenmüller in Brightwell.* "Prior to that time, the name *Jehovah* had been often used to describe the existence, the necessity, or the unchangeableness of God; but now, to indicate His faithfulness, His truth and constancy, in keeping and fulfilling His promises."—*Dathe in loco. Holden*, however, and others, would elude the difficulty by reading the clause interrogatively. He says, "It is impossible to read the history of Abraham, &c., without being convinced that both the name of *Jehovah*, and the attributes implied by that name, were known to them. Our *A. V.*, therefore, must be erroneous. Now every difficulty will be removed by

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God by "His name" in this passage mean syllables or letters, but the knowledge of His glory and majesty, which shone out more fully and more brightly in the redemption of His Church, than in the commencement of the covenant. For Abraham and the other Patriarchs were content with a smaller measure of light; whence it follows that the fault of their descendants would be less excusable, if their faith was not answerable to the increase of their grace. Meanwhile, Moses is awakened to activity whilst God is setting before him a magnificent and singular means of shewing forth His glory.

4. *And I have also established my covenant.* The hope of the deliverance which He had formerly promised, and which the Patriarchs had expected, He confirms by alluding to the covenant, as I have just above said; and the particle גַּם, *gam*, which is twice repeated, is, in the first case, *causal*, in the second, *illative*, as much as to say, "Since I covenanted with your fathers, therefore I have now determined to bring you into the land of Canaan;" unless it be preferred to resolve it thus, "I, the same who established the covenant with your fathers, now also have heard your groaning." Moreover, because the covenant is founded on free grace, God commands the redemption to be expected as much from His good pleasure as from His steadfastness. But He again commends the faith of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, because they patiently consented to be strangers and pilgrims in the land of Canaan, which by the covenant of God was their own lawful inheritance. For it was a proof of their exemplary virtue, to be wanderers all their lives, and not to have a single corner to put their foot upon, unless what was granted them by sufferance for the erection of their tents, being at the mercy of their neighbours; as natives are always apt to despise strangers. And by this comparison the slowness of heart and ingratitude of their posterity is the more condemned, if they refuse to take possession of this land, which was so earnestly desired by their holy fathers, and at the

reading it interrogatively, 'And by my name Jehovah was I not known to them?' which is both agreeable to the Hebrew idiom, and to the scope of the context."

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sight of which alone they counted themselves blessed, although they were only sojourners there.

5. *And I have also heard the groaning.* He assigns the reason why He so long had delayed to fulfil His promise, viz., because He would have His people sorely troubled, that He might more openly succour them in their affliction; besides, He chose that they should be unjustly oppressed by the Egyptians, in order that He might more justly rescue them from their tyrannical masters, as He had said to Abraham that He would avenge them after they had been afflicted. (Gen. xv. 13, 14.) He therefore reminds them by this circumstance, that the due time for helping them had come; because, if they had been always treated humanely, and the laws of hospitality had been observed towards them, there would have been no cause for shaking off the yoke; but now, after that the Egyptians, regardless of all justice, had broken faith with them, it was just that the groaning and cries of His cruelly afflicted people should be heard by God. But He always expressly asserts that this depended on the covenant, both that the Jews might acknowledge him to be only bound to them by regard to His own free promise, and also that, being persuaded that He is true to His promises, they might more surely expect deliverance. The meaning of God's "remembering" His promise I have elsewhere said to be, that he shews His remembrance of it by what He does.[1] What follows in the next verse, "Say unto the children of Israel, I am the Lord," is intended to remove their doubts. It was a thing as impossible to human apprehension, to tear away this weak and unwarlike people from their cruel tyrants, as to rescue sheep from the jaws of wolves, and to preserve them in safety after they had been mangled and wounded by their teeth. Therefore God begins by declaring His incomparable power, to shew that there is no difficulty with Him in performing anything whatever, although incredible. Therefore, he adds, that he would "redeem them with a stretched-out arm, and with great judgments," as much as to say, I will give miraculous proofs of my mighty power, which shall surpass all human apprehension. By

[1] *Vide* Note on chap. ii. 24, "demonstrationem effectus."—*Lat.*

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"judgments,"[1] He means the manner of His dealing, which would at the same time testify His justice. For with the Hebrews this word means any disposition, method, order, or custom, and sometimes also measure. We say in French, *façons notables ou estranges*, (notable or strange *fashions*.)

7. *And I will take you to me.* The end of their liberation is here described in the continued tenor of His grace. For it would have been little that the people should once be redeemed from Egypt, unless, when redeemed, they had lived under the defence and guardianship of God. As, therefore, He had long since separated the holy seed of Abraham from the other nations by circumcision, He now again sets it apart, (*sanctificat*,) and promises that he will be their God. In these words, then, their peculiar election, as well as its perpetuity, is asserted; since to be accounted the people of God means the same as to be by especial privilege received into his favour, and to be called by adoption to the hope of eternal salvation. But the future tense shews that the benefit was not to be merely temporal, when God with a stretched-out arm shall bring the people out of Egypt, but that this should only be the beginning of eternal protection. Moreover, we should observe the *anagoge* or similitude between us and the Israelites, because God has once delivered us by the hand of his only-begotten Son from the tyranny of Satan, to this end, that he may always pursue us with his paternal love. Afterwards he subjoins the possession of the land of Canaan as an earnest or pledge, which was given to the Israelites, in order that God might always dwell among them, protect them with his aid, and defend them with his power. I have said that this was the earnest of their adoption, because the faith of the fathers was not to be tied to earthly blessings, but to tend to an higher object. Meanwhile, by this outward sign God shewed them that they were his peculiar people, for whose habitation he chose the land in which he would be worshipped. By saying He

[1] שִׁפְטִים, *judicial inflictions.* What *C.* has said of the latitude of the meanings assignable to this word, is rather true of the kindred noun, מִשְׁפָּט.—*W.*

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"would lift up his hand,"[1] He means in confirmation, because the promise was ratified by the addition of an oath. It is indeed certain that there is enough and more than enough steadfastness in the simple word of God; but He made this concession to man's weakness, and interposed His sacred name as a pledge, that they might with fuller confidence be persuaded that nothing was promised them in vain. To lift up the hand, means to swear; a similitude taken from men, who, by this gesture, testify that they speak in the sight of God, as if they would call Him down as a witness from heaven. This is not applicable to God, who swears by Himself, because there is none greater to whom He may lift His hand, (Heb. vi. 13;) but, metaphorically, the custom of men is transferred to Him. As to the insertion, that "they should know that He was the Lord," after they had been brought forth, it contains an indirect rebuke; since that knowledge is too late which comes after the event. But at the same time, He promises that He would cause them openly to experience how true He is in all His sayings, that the Israelites may more constantly expect their redemption. Repeating at the close that He is Jehovah, He magnifies (as He had just before done) His invincible power, which easily surmounts all impediments; whilst this expression also contains a testimony to His truth, as if He had said that He alone can be safely trusted to, because He is both faithful in His promises and possessed of infinite power.

9. And Moses spake so unto the children of Israel: but they hearkened not unto Moses for anguish of spirit, and for cruel bondage.

10. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

11. Go in, speak unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, that he let the children of Israel go out of his land.

12. And Moses spake before the Lord, saying, Behold, the children of Israel have not hearkened unto me; how then shall Pharaoh hear me, who *am* of uncircumcised lips?

13. And the Lord spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, and gave

9. Et ita loquutus est Moses ad filios Israel: sed non audierunt Mosen præ angustia spiritus, et præ dura servitute.

10. Loquutus autem est Jehova ad Mosen, dicens,

11. Ingredere et loquere ad Pharaonem regem Ægypti, ut dimittat filios Israel e terra sua.

12. Tunc loquutus est Moses coram Jehovah, dicendo, Ecce, filii Israel non audierunt me: et quomodo audiet me Pharao qui sum incircumcisus labiis?

13. Loquutus autem fuerat Jehova ad Mosen, et Aharon, dederat-

[1] *Vide* margin of *A. V.*

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them a charge unto the children of Israel, and unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, to bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt.

que eis mandata ad filios Israel et ad Pharaonem regem Ægypti, ut emitteret filios Israel e terra Ægypti.

9. *And Moses spake so.* From this verse it appears that Moses is referring to the second message which he was commanded to bear. For they had before heard with great joy and approbation, and had expressed their thankfulness to God, that the time of their deliverance was come. Now Moses relates that their hearts were shut against the announcement that he made to them of this grace. Thus do the afflicted often, by closing their ears, shut the gate against the promises of God, which is indeed a marvellous thing. For it is not to be wondered at, if they who are full and intoxicated with prosperity, reject the mercy of God; but it is contrary to nature that the sorrow which ought to awaken the longings of those who are overwhelmed with trouble, should be an obstacle to their receiving the comfort freely offered them of God. But it is too common for people the more they are respectively afflicted, to harden themselves against the reception of God's help. Moses relates that the children of Israel were affected by this disease, when so kind an invitation of God was repulsed from their deaf ears, because anguish had taken possession of their hearts. But since it is natural for us to be thus straitened by pain and grief, let us learn from this example to struggle that our minds should escape from their sorrows, so far at least as to be able to receive the grace of God; for there is no greater curse than to be rendered heavy and dull, so as to be deaf to God's promises.

10. *And the Lord spake unto Moses.* Moses more clearly sets forth how indulgently God bore with the malevolent repulse of the people; the just reward of which would have been, that He should have suffered them to rot a hundred times over in their miseries, when they so obstinately rushed to their own destruction. It is, therefore, of His extraordinary loving-kindness, that He ceases not to aid those who are willing to perish. Moreover, it must be observed, that Moses was strengthened by this new command, since he had been himself shaken by the despair of the people. But it was no

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trifling sin to be so hardened and stupified by misfortune, as to reject the remedy proposed to them. He might then reasonably conjecture, that he was to proceed no further, lest he should be foolishly exposing himself to so many anxieties at his own great peril, and with no profitable result. But God meets this temptation, and commands him, nevertheless, to contend perseveringly with the obstinacy of Pharaoh. But the answer of Moses shews, that this legation had been again enjoined upon the holy man, since the time that the anguish of the people had closed the way of God's grace. For when at first the people were aroused by the first message to a cheerful hope of deliverance, this happy commencement had encouraged Moses to extraordinary energy for the performance of his task; and this might naturally fail him upon the unprosperous event which had now taken place, until he had been animated anew to perseverance. He therefore asks to be dismissed, lest his labour should be in vain, and reasons from the less to the greater, since it would be much more difficult to influence the mind of Pharaoh to give up his claims against his will, than to persuade the afflicted (people) to receive the aid profered to them from on high. But he had now learnt from experience, that the people's hearts were as a door closed against God; why then should he try to move the exceeding great rock from its place? Although it was not his design to shake off the burden of the vocation imposed upon him, yet he would have willingly withdrawn himself indirectly, and turned his back upon it. Thus we sometimes see the heartiest of God's servants beginning to faint in the midst of their course, especially when they encounter difficulties, and stumble upon some path which is worse than they expected. Wherefore we must the more earnestly entreat of God, that amidst the various trials against which we have to struggle, He may never deprive us of the assistance of His power, but rather continually inspire us with new strength in proportion to the violence of our contests. But what hope of the deliverance now survived, the minister of which was so down-hearted and depressed, and which the people themselves had so openly despised, if God had not

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accomplished all things by Himself? Nor is there any doubt that He wished to shew, by this failure on the part of men, that His own hand was sufficient for Him. That Moses should call himself "of uncircumcised lips," I refer to his stammering, which he had before alleged as an obstacle; although, if any prefer to understand it otherwise, I make no strong objection.

13. *And the Lord spake unto Moses.* I translate it, "the Lord had spoken unto Moses;" because reference is here made to the commencement of his calling, and, therefore, the sense will be more accurately rendered by the *perfect past* tense; for he repeats, what he had already said, that he and Aaron his brother had not acted rashly, but had been commissioned by the command of God. The drift is, that however often the work might have been in some way interrupted, the counsel of God still held firm for the liberation of the people. But it is evident that he speaks of the first command, because he says that he and his brother were sent as well to the children of Israel as to Pharaoh.

14. These *be* the heads of their fathers' houses: The sons of Reuben, the first-born of Israel; Hanoch, and Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi: these *be* the families of Reuben.

15. And the sons of Simeon; Jemuel, and Jamin, and Ohad, and Jachin, and Zohar, and Shaul the son of a Canaanitish woman: these *are* the families of Simeon.

16. And these *are* the names of the sons of Levi, according to their generations; Gershon, and Kohath, and Merari. And the years of the life of Levi *were* an hundred thirty and seven years.

17. The sons of Gershon; Libni and Shimi, according to their families.

18. And the sons of Kohath; Amram, and Izhar, and Hebron, and Uzziel. And the years of the life of Kohath *were* an hundred thirty and three years.

19. And the sons of Merari; Mahli and Mushi: these *are* the families of Levi, according to their generations.

14. Ista sunt capita domus patrum suorum, filii Reuben primogeniti Israel, Henoch et Phallu, Hesron et Charmi. Hæ cognationes Reuben.

15. Filii Simeon, Jemuel, et Jamin, Ohad, et Jachin et Sohar, et Saul filius Chananææ. Hæ cognationes Simeon.

16. Et hæc nomina filiorum Levi in generationibus suis, Gerson et Kehath et Merari. Anni autem vitæ Levi triginta septem et centum anni.

17. Filii Gerson, Libni et Simei secundum cognationes suas.

18. Filii Kehath, Amram et Ishar, Hebron et Uziel. Anni autem vitæ Kehath triginta tres et centum anni.

19. Filii vero Merari, Mahli, et Musi. Hæ familiæ Levi secundum generationes suas.

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20. And Amram took him Jochebed his father's sister to wife; and she bare him Aaron and Moses. And the years of the life of Amram *were* an hundred and thirty and seven years.

21. And the sons of Izhar; Korah, and Nepheg, and Zichri.

22. And the sons of Uzziel; Mishael, and Elzaphan, and Zithri.

23. And Aaron took him Elisheba, daughter of Amminadab, sister of Naashon, to wife; and she bare him Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar.

24. And the sons of Korah; Assir, and Elkanah, and Abiasaph: these *are* the families of the Korhites.

25. And Eleazar, Aaron's son, took him *one* of the daughters of Putiel to wife; and she bare him Phinehas: these *are* the heads of the fathers of the Levites, according to their families.

26. These *are* that Aaron and Moses, to whom the Lord said, Bring out the children of Israel from the land of Egypt, according to their armies.

27. These *are* they which spake to Pharaoh king of Egypt, to bring out the children of Israel from Egypt: these *are* that Moses and Aaron.

28. And it came to pass, on the day *when* the Lord spake unto Moses in the land of Egypt,

29. That the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, I *am* the Lord: speak thou unto Pharaoh king of Egypt all that I say unto thee.

30. And Moses said before the Lord, Behold, I *am* of uncircumcised lips, and how shall Pharaoh hearken unto me?

20. Accepit autem Amram Jochebed amitam suam in uxorem, quæ genuit ei Aharon et Mosen. Porro anni vitæ Amram triginta septem et centum anni.

21. Filii Ishar, Corah et Nepheg et Zichri.

22. Et filii Uziel, Misael et Elsaphan et Sithri.

23. Et accepit Aharon Eliseba filiam Amminadab sororem Nahasson sibi in uxorem, quæ peperit ei Nadab et Abihu, et Eleazar et Ithamar.

24. Filii Corah Assir et Elcanah et Abiasaph. Hæ familiæ Corhitarum.

25. Eleazar autem filius Aharon sumpsit sibi e filiabus Putiel in uxorem, quæ peperit ei Pinhas. Hæc capita patrum Levitarum secundum cognationes suas.

26. Hic est Aharon et Moses, ad quos dixit Jehova, Educite filios Israel e terra Ægypti per exercitus suos.

27. Ipsi sunt qui loquuti sunt ad Pharaonem regem Ægypti, ut emitteret filios Israel ex Ægypto. Ipse est Moses et Aharon.

28. Accidit autem quo die loquutus est Jehova ad Mosen in terra Ægypti,

29. Quo loquutus est Jehova ad Mosen, dicendo: Ego Jehova: loquere ad Pharaonem regem Ægypti quæcunque ego loquor ad te:

30. Tunc ait Moses coram Jehova, Ecce ego incircumcisus sum labiis, et quomodo audiet me Pharao?

14. *These be the heads.* The object of Moses here is to testify to all ages the origin of his race, that none may doubt that, in the free departure of the people, the promise given to Abraham was completed. For if the Israelites had gone forth under any other leader, there might have been some question as to the chief author of it; now, since Moses was

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chosen from that family, and from the posterity of Abraham, it more clearly appears that the whole matter was effected under the guidance of God. But although he enumerates not only the tribe of Levi, but begins with Reuben the first-born, and then subjoins Simeon, still it is easily seen that he especially refers to the tribe of Levi; yet, because the families of Reuben and Simeon came first in order, he fitly proceeds from them to the third. He does not, however, recount the others at present, because a more favourable opportunity would occur hereafter. This, then, is the point to be observed, that the minister of their deliverance, by whose hand God would ratify the truth of His promise, was chosen from the race of Abraham. And certainly we see how Satan in opposition has obscured, through profane writers, this memorable history with many fables, and especially when he cunningly endeavours to bury the race of Abraham. Moses, by divine wisdom, anticipates this subtlety, mentioning the heads of the families by name, lest there should be any obscurity about the origin of the nation.

16. *And these are the names of the sons of Levi.* Because it was especially desirable to know the origin of Moses and Aaron, he refers to it at greater length, and more distinctly enumerates the families which descended from the patriarch Levi; not to attribute any peculiar dignity to his own race, but to make it appear more clearly that the people was not brought out by any stranger, but that he, who was to be the witness among his brethren of the power, and grace, and truth of God, was divinely chosen from the genuine stock of Abraham. And certainly it was right that this incomparable blessing of God, if any, should not only be celebrated, but also proved, in order that its certainty might be preserved, as well as its memory, in all ages. But how remote from any ambitious feeling was the design of Moses in this narrative, we may gather from a single part of it, where he says that he was the offspring of his father's aunt;[1] for

[1] Jeremy Taylor, on the Rule of Conscience, Book ii., Rule 3, says, "Amram, the father of Moses, begat him of his cousin-german Jochabed. That she was his aunt, is commonly supposed; but the LXX., and the vulgar Latin, report her to be his aunt's daughter, though, by the style of the Hebrews, she was called his aunt."—Ed. Heber. 1839, vol. xii.

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although the law had not yet forbidden illicit marriages, yet did nature itself dictate, that it was improper for a nephew to have connection with his aunt, who stands in the degree of his mother. When, therefore, Moses does not hesitate to confess that he sprang from an incestuous marriage, he does not only fail to consult his own reputation, but ingenuously proclaims the disgrace of his parents, for the sake of illustrating solely the glory of God. Nor was ignorance excusable, although the law was as yet unwritten, in neglecting the distinction between right and wrong, by the violation of natural modesty. But because men are too apt to indulge in such licentiousness, it was necessary to prohibit in express terms these vile affections, which have almost always immoderately and extensively prevailed amongst Orientals. Meanwhile, we may learn that the imitation of the patriarchs is not safe, when we think that we may indiscriminately adopt whatever they did. That in their long lives, Levi, Kohath, and Amram begat so few children, viz., the first, three; the second, four; the third, two; did not occur without the design on the part of God, that, in the incredible fecundity which afterwards ensued, the miracle of His grace might appear more clearly; for who would have thought that it could happen that, in less than 200 years, so immense a multitude could spring from so few persons? Nor did it happen by human provision; but after God, according to His wont, had seemed to mock them in their humble and contemptible beginnings, His power was more brightly manifested by their sudden and unusual multiplication. I pass over some points which seem to be of little or no importance.

26. *These are that Aaron and Moses.* It is not without a cause that Moses so often reasserts that their office was assigned to himself and his brother by the command of God, both that the Israelites may perceive that they were rescued from their deep abyss by divine grace, and that their minds may be recalled to God's ancient covenant, and may ac-

p. 330. *Corn. a Lapide*, also, in Ex. ii. 1, trusting to the same authorities, and the Chaldee Paraphrast, rejects the scoff of *C.*, as he calls it, in alleging that Moses sprang from an incestuous marriage.

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knowledge that their Fathers' hope was not in vain; and, finally, that they may hereafter altogether devote themselves to God. There seems, also, to be an indirect *antithesis* between the armies of the people and two vile and abject men. For they would have been far from being able to bear so weighty a burden, unless God had exceeded all their hopes in working miraculously by their hands. Therefore the Spirit magnifies elsewhere this grace, that God "led his people, like a flock, by the hand of Moses and Aaron." (Ps. lxxvii. 20.) For what could be less probable than that a great multitude, which would make up many nations, should obey the commands of two men, should be ruled by their counsel, and gathered into one place by their exertions, in order that they should migrate into another land against the will of a very powerful king? For what was their united authority to command twelve armies, separated in their several battalions? What no earthly kings, with all their power and wisdom, their terror and their threats, could effect, God performed by means of two unwarlike men, neither experienced nor renowned; when Moses himself, alarmed by the magnitude of the work, often deprecated the commission entrusted to him. For, at the end of this chapter, he again repeats his excuse, that he was not eloquent, but of hesitating and embarrassed speech. This, then, is the point to which all tends, viz., to assign to God the praise of His loving-kindness, and to heighten His glory. There is some ambiguity in verse 28, for it might be read separately with this sense, that "God not only spoke in the wilderness of Midian, to set Moses over the people in their deliverance, but also in Egypt after some time had elapsed;" thus "on the day," would mean, "after some time," but it seems better to me to read the three verses in connection with each other.

CHAPTER SEVENTH.

1. And the Lord said unto Moses, See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh; and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet.
2. Thou shalt speak all that I

1. Et dixit Jehova ad Mosen, Ecce, dedi te Deum Pharaoni, eritque Aharon frater tuus Propheta tuus.
2. Tu loqueris omnia quæ man-

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command thee; and Aaron thy brother shall speak unto Pharaoh, that he send the children of Israel out of his land.

3. And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt.

4. But Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you, that I may lay my hand upon Egypt, and bring forth mine armies, *and* my people the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt, by great judgments.

5. And the Egyptians shall know that I *am* the Lord, when I stretch forth mine hand upon Egypt, and bring out the children of Israel from among them.

6. And Moses and Aaron did as the Lord commanded them, so did they.

7. And Moses *was* fourscore years old, and Aaron fourscore and three years old, when they spake unto Pharaoh.

davero tibi, et Aharon frater loquetur ad Pharaonem, ut dimittat filios Israel e terra sua.

3. Ego autem indurabo cor Pharaonis, et multiplicabo signa mea, atque portenta mea in terra Ægypti.

4. Et non audiet vos Pharao: sed extendam manum meam super Ægyptum, et educam exercitus meos, et populum meum filios Israel e terra Ægypti in judiciis magnis.

5. Et cognoscent Ægyptii quod ego sim Jehova, quum extendero manum meam super Ægyptum, et eduxero filios Israel e medio eorum.

6. Fecit ergo Moses et Aharon: sicuti præceperat Jehova ipsis, sic fecerunt.

7. Moses autem filius octoginta annorum fuit, et Aharon filius octoginta trium annorum, quum loquerentur ad Pharaonem.

1. *And the Lord said unto Moses.* Moses again repeats, that consolation was afforded him in his anxiety, and a remedy given for his want of faith; since he was both armed himself with divine authority, and Aaron was appointed as his companion and assistant. For that he was "made a god to Pharaoh," means that he was furnished with supreme authority and power, whereby he should cast down the tyrant's pride.[1] Nor did God take away anything from Himself in order to transfer it to Moses; since He so communicates to His servants what is peculiar to Himself as to remain Himself in His completeness. Nay, whenever He seems to resign a part of His glory to His ministers, He only teaches that the virtue and efficacy of His Spirit will be joined with their labours, that they may not be fruitless. Moses, therefore, was a god to Pharaoh; because in him God exerted His power, that he should be superior to the greatness of the king. It is a common figure of the Hebrews, to give the title of God to all things excellent, since He alone reigns

[1] "The word *Elohim*, as the Hebrews remark, whether applied to God, or to men, or to angels, signifies judicial power."—*Grotius in Pol. Syn.*

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over heaven and earth, and exalts or casts down angels, as well as men, according to His will. By this consolation, as I have said, the weakness of Moses was supported, so that, relying on God's authority, he might fearlessly despise the fierceness of the king. A reinforcement is also given him in the person of his brother, lest his stammering should be any hinderance to him. It has been already remarked, that it was brought about by the ingratitude of Moses, that half the honour should be transferred to his brother; although God, in giving him as his companion, so far lessened his dignity as to put the younger before the first-born. The name of "Prophet" is here used for an interpreter; because the prophetical office proceeds from God alone. But, because God delivered through one to the other what He wished to be said or done, Aaron is made subject to Moses, just as if he had been God; since it is fit that they should be listened to without contradiction who are the representatives of God. And this is made clearer in the second verse, where God restricts the power given to Moses, and circumscribes it within its proper bounds; for, when He directs him to speak whatever He commands, He ranks him as His minister, and confines him under authority, without departing from His own rights.

3. *And I will harden.* As the expression is somewhat harsh, many commentators, as I have before said, take pains to soften it. Hence it is that some take the words in connection, "I will harden Pharaoh's heart by multiplying my signs;" as if God were pointing out the external cause of his obstinacy. But Moses has already declared, and will hereafter repeat it, that the king's mind was hardened by God in other ways besides His working miracles. As to the meaning of the words, I have no doubt that, by the first clause, God armed the heart of His servant with firmness, to resist boldly the perversity of the tyrant; and then reminds him that he has the remedy in his hand. Thus, then, I think this passage must be translated, "I indeed will harden Pharaoh's heart, but I will multiply my signs;" as though He had said, his hardness will be no obstacle to you, for the miracles will be sufficient to overcome it. In the same sense,

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He adds immediately afterwards, "Although Pharaoh should not hear you, still I will lay on my hand;" for thus, in my opinion, the conjunctions should be resolved *adversatively.* I do not altogether reject the interpretation of others; "I will harden Pharaoh's heart, that I may multiply my signs;" and, "He[1] will not hearken unto you, that I may lay on my hand." And, in fact, God willed that Pharaoh should pertinaciously resist Moses, in order that the deliverance of the people might be more conspicuous. There is, however, no need of discussing at length the manner in which God hardens reprobates, as often as this expression occurs. Let us hold fast to what I have already observed, that they are but poor speculators who refer it to a mere bare permission; because if God, by blinding their minds, or hardening their hearts, inflicts deserved punishment upon the reprobate, He not only permits them to do what they themselves please, but actually executes a judgment which He knows to be just. Whence also it follows, that He not only withdraws the grace of His Spirit, but delivers to Satan those whom he knows to be deserving of blindness of mind and obstinacy of heart. Meanwhile, I admit that the blame of either evil rests with the men themselves, who wilfully blind themselves, and with a wilfulness which is like madness, are driven, or rather rush, into sin. I have also briefly shewn what foul calumniators are they, who for the sake of awakening ill-will against us, pretend that God is thus made to be the author of sin; since it would be an act of too great absurdity to estimate His secret and incomprehensible judgments by the little measure of our own apprehension. The opponents of this doctrine foolishly and inconsiderately mix together two different things, since the hardness of heart is the sin of man, but the hardening of the heart is the judgment of God. He again propounds in this place His great judgments, in order that the Israelites may expect with anxious and attentive minds His magnificent and wonderful mode of operation.

5. *And the Egyptians shall know.* This is a species of irony, viz., that the Egyptians, subdued by the plagues, should at last begin to feel that their contention was against

[1] It is thus translated in *A. V.*

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God. The object, however, of God was to encourage Moses, lest he should fail before the madness and fury of his enemies. Therefore, although the Egyptians might be stupid in their rage, still God declares that in the end they would know that they had fought to their own destruction when they waged war against heaven; for there is an implied *antithesis* between their tardy acknowledgment of this and their present slowness of heart, which was at length forcibly removed when God thundered openly against them from heaven. For we know how unconcernedly the wicked oppose their[1] iron obstinacy to the Divine threatenings, until they are forced into a state of alarm by violence; not because they are humbled beneath the hand of God, but because they see that by all their raging and turbulence they cannot escape from punishment; just as drunkards, awakened from their intoxication, would willingly drown their senses in eternal sleep, and even in annihilation; yet, whether they will or not, they must bear the pains of their intemperance. Moreover, this acknowledgment which was to be extorted from the unwilling, admonished Moses and others[2] to attribute just praise to the power of God, before they were experimentally convinced of it. It is true, indeed, that the sincere worshippers of God also are sometimes instructed by punishments, (to which reference is made, Isaiah xxvi. 9, "when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness;") but a kind of "knowledge" is here pointed out which so prostrates the reprobate that they cease not to lift up their horns, as it were, against God; and thus it casts them down without amending them. There was also an experimental knowledge for the elect people, of which mention has been already made, (ch. vi. 7,) "ye shall know that I am the Lord your God, after that I shall have brought you out from the land of Egypt;" but this (properly speaking) is nothing more than a confirmation of the faith which, before the event takes place, is content with the simple word. Or, God certainly, by the event itself, reproves

[1] "Leur fiertè, comme un bouclier de fer;" their pride like an iron buckler.—*Fr.*

[2] Les autres fideles.—*Fr.*

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the dulness of His people when He sees that their confidence in His own word is not sufficiently strong. But the wicked so know God, that, lost in shame and fear, they see not what they do see.

6. *And Moses and Aaron did.* It is not for the sake of boasting that Moses reports his own obedience; but after having ingenuously confessed his hesitation, he now relates that he and his brother were in better courage for the performance of their office. In the meantime he shews that he, as well as his brother, was God's minister, and that he brought no industry, nor talent, nor counsel, nor dexterity himself, but simply obeyed God. Still from their example we must learn, that as we may not set about anything except what God prescribes, so we ought obediently and without objection to pursue whatever He commands. What follows as to their age is meant in amplification; since it was no common case, considering the natural coldness and heaviness of old age, that two octogenarians should have actively engaged in so difficult a charge. For I do not assent to the opinion of those who think that their dignity was enhanced by their age. I admit that age is venerable; but Moses had far different views, namely, that, excluding all human means, he might celebrate God's glory, who performed so mighty a work by men who were failing and decrepit with age. For although their vigour was as yet unabated, their old age might have made them timid, and might have also affected the people with anxiety, when they beheld their leaders to be not only of advanced age, but even naturally not far from the grave.

8. And the Lord spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying,

9. When Pharaoh shall speak unto you, saying, Shew a miracle for you: then thou shalt say unto Aaron, Take thy rod, and cast *it* before Pharaoh, *and* it shall become a serpent.

10. And Moses and Aaron went in unto Pharaoh, and they did so as the Lord had commanded: and Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, and before his servants, and it became a serpent.

8. Et dixit Jehova ad Mosen et Aharon, dicendo.

9. Si loquutus fuerit ad vos Pharao, dicendo, Statuite vobis prodigium: tunc dices ad Aharon, Tolle virgam tuam, et projice coram Pharaone, et fiet in serpentem.

10. Venit ergo Moses et Aharon ad Pharaonem, et ita fecerunt ut præceperat Iehova. Et projecit Aharon virgam suam coram Pharaone et coram servis ejus, et fuit in serpentem.

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11. Then Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers: now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments.

12. For they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents: but Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods.

13. And he hardened Pharaoh's heart, that he hearkened not unto them; as the Lord had said.

11. Tunc vocavit etiam Pharao sapientes et incantatores, et fecerunt etiam ipsi magi Ægyptiorum hoc modo suis incantationibus.

12. Projecerunt enim singuli virgas suas, quæ fuerunt in dracones. Devoravit tamen virga Aharon virgas illorum.

13. Et obduravit cor Pharaonis, neque audivit illos, sicuti loquutus erat Jehova.

8. *And the Lord spake.* No wonder that Moses often repeats the same thing, because he wrote for persons of rude and dull minds. But it behoves us, lest we should be disgusted by his simple and popular style, diligently to examine how little we are inclined to be acute and earnest in our consideration of the works of God. No doubt there is here related what we have already heard respecting the change of the rod into a serpent, except that he now tells us that the miracle which had before been performed in the wilderness of Midian, and afterwards in Egypt, in the sight of the people, was likewise performed once more before Pharaoh. Moreover, we gather from hence that at the request of Pharaoh the servants of God had proved and testified their vocation; and therefore that his pertinacity was the less excusable, since he despised the power of God so manifestly shewn forth. For this is usual with unbelievers, to demand proofs of God's power, which they may still discredit,—not that they professedly scorn God, but because their secret impiety urges them to seek after subterfuges. The message is disagreeable and full of what is annoying to the proud king; and because he does not dare directly to refuse God, he invents a plausible pretext for his refusal, by asking for a miracle; and when this is performed, he seeks still deeper lurking places, as we shall very soon perceive. Since, therefore, it was certain that he would not pay a willing obedience to the divine command, and would not yield before he had been miraculously convinced, God furnishes His servants with a notable and sure testimony of His power. Moreover, the change of the crook, or shepherd's staff, into a serpent had this object, namely, that the mean and rustic guise of

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Moses should not be despised. For (since kings are wont to exalt themselves very highly) Pharaoh might have laughed at the audacity of Moses and Aaron, who, forgetful, as it seemed, of their condition, put themselves into conflict with the whole power of Egypt; but Pharaoh knew, although they were not to be dreaded for their splendid appearance, and had nothing magnificent about them, that they were still not destitute of sure and strong help, when he saw the serpent come forth from the rod. In a word, God bore witness that His power is hidden beneath the infirmity of His servants, so that at every season He might render formidable to the greatest monarchs those who otherwise are like earthen vessels. It is not clear to me why Aaron was commanded to cast down the rod rather than Moses, unless, perhaps, because God would designedly humble the pride of the arrogant king, when He did not deign to exert His power by the hand of His superior servant, but only employed the inferior one. Therefore, with reference to this ministration, the rod of God and of Moses is now called the rod of Aaron. Thus Paul boasts of *his* gospel, the office of preaching which he knew to be committed to him. (Rom. xvi. 25, and 2 Tim. ii. 8.)

10. *And Moses and Aaron went in.* Although they were now fully conscious of their vocation; and knew that they were endued with divine power for working miracles, yet would they never have dared to approach the fierce and cruel tyrant, unless the inward inspiration of the Spirit had armed them to persevere. Hence, then, arose their magnanimity to overcome all terrors; because God raised them by faith above everything that is lofty on earth, and sustained them by this support. Therefore do they come to the conflict with invincible strength, and confirm by a miracle their most hateful mission. But as to the question which is ordinarily raised here, whether the change of the rods was true and substantial, as they call it; with respect to that of Moses, I am confidently persuaded that it was so; for there is no more difficulty with God to change the forms of things, than there was to create heaven and earth out of nothing. Philosophers are not ignorant of the great variety of transmutations which

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occur in nature, nay, it is patent even to the uninstructed; but, because the rod was changed into a serpent in an extraordinary manner, and contrary to the course of nature, we must form the same judgment of it as of the change of Lot's wife into a pillar of salt; except that the rod soon after returned into its original nature. (Gen. xix. 26.) There is more reason for doubt respecting the rods of the magicians, since it is probable that the eyes of the wicked king were deceived by their illusions. But there would be nothing absurd in our saying, that such liberty was conceded to them by God, not that they should create one body out of another, but that they should set forth the work of God as being their own. For assuredly the potency of error far surpasses the bounds of our comprehension. This Paul affirms to be given to Satan for the punishment of unbelievers, "that they should believe a lie," because they will not obey the truth. (2 Thess. ii. 11.) He says, indeed, that the coming of Antichrist shall be with signs and lying wonders, but by adding the word "power," he shews that the deception or illusion shall not consist so much in the external form of things, as in the perverse abuse of signs.[1] Therefore Christ absolutely pronounces that "false prophets shall shew great signs and wonders." (Matt. xxiv. 24.) It might be, then, that God in just vengeance might choose the rods of the magicians to be changed into serpents; as we shall hereafter see that the waters were changed by their enchantments into blood, that the earth was covered with frogs and lice, that the fields were smitten with hail, and the atmosphere darkened.[2] Still we must be assured, that not even a fly can be created except by God only; but that Satan lays hold, for the purpose of his impostures, of things which are done by the secret judgment of God.

[1] Calvin's own comment on 2 Thess. ii. 9, may explain this somewhat obscure passage, "He gives the names of *miracles of falsehood* (lying wonders) not merely to such as are falsely and deceptively contrived by cunning men with a view to impose upon the simple—but takes falsehood as consisting in this, that Satan draws to a contrary end works which otherwise are truly works of God, and abuses miracles so as to obscure God's glory. In the meantime, however, there can be no doubt that he deceives by means of enchantments, an example of which we have in Pharaoh's magicians. (Ex. vii. 11)." *Calvin Soc. Edition*, p. 337.

[2] It does not appear that the magicians performed the two latter miracles.

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11. *Then Pharaoh also called.* The impiety of the tyrant, which had before lain hid in the recesses of his heart, now breaks forth; when he does not hesitate to enter into the lists with God. For he was sufficiently instructed in the wonderful power of God, had not his iniquity urged him onwards into desperate madness. In asking for a sign, he thought (as I before said) that he should have had just cause for despising Moses; as the wicked trust that they may do anything with impunity, unless God should openly appear from heaven to prohibit them; but, because inflexible perversity altogether has possession of their hearts, they do not hesitate to resist the manifest power of God. Thus the wickedness of Pharaoh blinded his eyes, that, seeing the light, he saw it not; but, though convinced, still he sought for darkness to hide the sight of the light from him. He received, therefore, the just reward of such impious and diabolical arrogance, when he was deceived by the juggles of his own magicians. This is an example of great use, and well worthy to be noted; by which we are, first of all, taught, that the wicked, whatever disposition to be taught they may assume, still remain inwardly rebellious and stubborn; and, moreover, that they are not only inclined to error, but are eagerly borne towards it with all their heart. This vice is not always conspicuous in every individual; but when God brings His light nearer to them, it is easily detected, and betrays itself. How many, now-a-days, among the Papists are followers of wicked superstitions under the pretext of simplicity? As long as, under the garb of ignorance, they deceive themselves and others, they seem to be worthy of pity; but, as soon as the truth shines forth, they demonstrate their love for the impostures by which they perish, and their delight in falsehoods. Assuredly (as Paul says) they have "received not the love of the truth." (2 Thess. ii. 10.) Are we surprised at Pharaoh calling for the magicians, in order to repel from himself his sense of God's power? As if there were not many at this time, who hire for themselves certain impious brawlers,[1] by whose fascinating and fair words they may become besotted in their errors. It is remarkable, that

[1] Des caphars, et causeurs effrontez.—*Fr.*

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they are honourably called "wise men" by courtesy, although they were but inventors of deceit, and destitute of sound learning. For although astronomy flourished among them, and the study of liberal arts was cultivated, it yet appears from the context that they were devoted to many foolish imaginations, nay, that all their degenerate science was but vanity. For מכשפים,[1] *makshephim*, and חרטמים, *chartumim*, are the names of superstitious arts; the former signifying jugglers, or those who deceive the eyes and the senses by their enchantments; but the latter is used for those who cast nativities, telling people's fortunes by the horoscope, and prognosticating by the aspect of the stars. Therefore, although the Egyptian magicians had departed from genuine philosophy, they still retained the name of "wise men," that they might obtain credit for their delusions: as the devil, in order to appropriate God's glory, or to change himself into an angel of light, is wont to conceal his falsehoods by specious titles. Doubtless Pharaoh sought, as in a case of perplexity, to examine it more certainly by comparison; but yet for no other reason than to conceal his impiety under a fresh covering. The word להט,[2] *lahat*, although properly signifying the blade of a sword, is here used for enchantment. I think, however, that they mistake, who assign the reason for this to be, that they exercised their sorceries by a sword, or some similar weapon. It rather designates metaphorically the versatile motion, by which the magicians exhibit one thing for another; for it properly signifies "a flame." This severe and terrible vengeance upon Pharaoh ought to inspire us with terror, lest, in our hatred of truth, we should seek after deceptions. For this is intolerable profaneness, if de-

[1] The explanation of those words must be understood to be rather conjectural than gathered from any knowledge of their etymology. In Daniel ii., the same words are employed to designate the sorcerers and magicians of Babylon.—*W.*

[2] להט, *C.* has here said that each of two different significations is the proper one. As a verb, להט, is to burn with a flame; as a substantive it is a flame or flash; and hence the flashing of a sword; and sometimes that rapid crossing of the fingers which confuses the eye. But in ver. 22, and in viii. 3-14, the same word occurs with the omission of the middle letter; and this omission will justify its being regarded as belonging to the root לוט, which signifies hiding, involving in obscurity, practising deceitful arts.—*W.*

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signedly we desire to pervert the distinction between truth and falsehood. Therefore it is not to be wondered at, if God plunges into the deepest darkness of error, those who shut their eyes against the light presented to them; and if He hands those over to be the disciples of Satan, who refuse to listen to Him as their master.

12. *For they cast down every man.* The number of the magicians is not expressed; and although Paul names two, Jannes and Jambres,[1] (2 Tim. iii. 8,) it is probable that they were not the only ones, but the chief, and, as it were, the ringleaders. But I will not dispute this questionable point. The admonition of Paul is more to the purpose, that "as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses," so also there should always be false teachers, who would oppose Christ's true ministers, and indeed should "wax worse and worse." (Verse 13.) It is an awful fact that the reins were so given to these magicians, that they contended with Moses in almost an equal contest. But the ingratitude of the world is worthy of bearing the same punishment of blindness. God elsewhere testifies that when He permits false prophets to work miracles to deceive, it is to prove men's hearts. (Deut. xiii. 3.) And truly, unless our own hypocrisy were like a veil to take away the distinction between black and white, Satan would avail nothing by such arts and deceptions; but we ourselves, as if devoted to destruction, willingly cast ourselves into his nets; but especially against the reprobate, who obstinately seek for occasions of error, God casts this last thunderbolt, namely, He gives efficacy to the delusion, and so deprives them of their senses at the same time, that they do not guard themselves from manifest destruction. Many indeed would excuse Pharaoh, because, being deceived by his magicians, he did not disentangle himself from the error which he could not escape; for what could he do when he saw the contest equally maintained? But it must be thoroughly understood that none are so hurried away except those whom God would resist; especially the spirit of confusion and mental blindness seizes on those who have been obstinate in their wickedness. Nor must the mark of dis-

[1] *C.* has *Mambres*, the reading of the Vulgate.

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tinction be overlooked, that the rod of Moses swallowed up the rods of the magicians. How then was it that Pharaoh did not perceive Moses to be victorious? how was it that he rather turned aside to his own impostors? how was it, in fine, that he did not acknowledge God's servant who had been superior in the contest, except that the wicked maliciously close their eyes against the manifested power of God? Whosoever will aim at the right mark shall certainly never be destitute of God as his guide. Therefore blame is justly thrown upon Pharaoh, because through the hardness of his heart he would not attend. Too frivolous is that cavil which the Papists advance, that the serpent is called the rod of Moses, as the bread transubstantiated into the body of Christ retains the name of bread;[1] for they unskilfully confound two altogether different things; because, in the mystery of the Lord's Supper, the analogy between the sign and the thing signified always remains; in this miracle the case is entirely otherwise. Again, because the change was only temporary, Moses properly called that a rod to which its previous form was presently to be restored. Besides, in comparing the true serpent with the fictitious ones, he was unwilling to make a difference in names. But, to pass all this over, the Papists will prevail nothing, until they have shewn that the bread is transubstantiated into the body.[2] Nay, what they foolishly wrest against us, we may retort upon them, namely, that the bread is called the body of Christ although it remains bread, just as the serpent which then appeared is called the rod.

[1] "This is a metonymy," says *Corn. a Lapide in loco*, "for things are often called by the name of what they were, or of that into which they are changed. So Philo, St. Augustine, &c. For a similar or better reason, (however Calvin may here rail,) the *flesh* of Christ in the holy Sacrament is called *bread*, (1 Cor. xi. 26, and John vi. 31;) for the Jews call all sorts of food, and even flesh, by the name of *bread*, especially since in the Eucharist the accidents of bread and wine remain, and are seen; thus, judging as men by their eyesight and senses, they rightly call it *bread*, because they see and touch the *species* of bread."

The subject is somewhat more fully discussed by *C.* himself—*Institutes*, Book iv., ch. xvii. 15.—*C. Soc. Transl.*, Vol. iii. pp. 402, 403.

[2] This clause is inverted in the *Fr.*, "Que le corps est transubstantie au pain."

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14. And the Lord said unto Moses, Pharaoh's heart *is* hardened, he refuseth to let the people go.

15. Get thee unto Pharaoh in the morning: lo, he goeth out unto the water; and thou shalt stand by the river's brink against he come; and the rod which was turned to a serpent shalt thou take in thine hand.

16. And thou shalt say unto him, The Lord God of the Hebrews hath sent me unto thee, saying, Let my people go, that they may serve me in the wilderness: and, behold, hitherto thou wouldest not hear.

17. Thus saith the Lord, In this thou shalt know that I *am* the Lord: behold, I will smite with the rod that *is* in mine hand upon the waters which *are* in the river, and they shall be turned to blood.

18. And the fish that *is* in the river shall die, and the river shall stink; and the Egyptians shall loathe to drink of the water of the river.

19. And the Lord spake unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Take thy rod, and stretch out thine hand upon the waters of Egypt, upon their streams, upon their rivers, and upon their ponds, and upon all their pools of water, that they may become blood; and *that* there may be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, both in *vessels of* wood, and in *vessels of* stone.

20. And Moses and Aaron did so, as the Lord commanded: and he lifted up the rod, and smote the waters that *were* in the river, in the sight of Pharaoh, and in the sight of his servants; and all the waters that *were* in the river were turned to blood.

21. And the fish that *was* in the river died; and the river stank, and the Egyptians could not drink of the water of the river: and there was blood throughout all the land of Egypt.

22. And the magicians of Egypt did so with their enchantments: and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, neither did he hearken unto them; as the Lord had said.

14. Tunc dixit Jehova ad Mosen, Aggravatum est cor Pharaonis ne dimittat populum.

15. Vade ad Pharaonem mane: ecce, egreditur ad aquas, et stes in occursum ejus super ripam fluminis: et virgam quæ versa fuit in serpentem tolles in manum tuam.

16. Et dices ad eum, Jehova Deus Hebræorum misit me ad te, dicens, Dimitte populum meum ut serviat mihi in deserto: et ecce, non audisti huc usque.

17. Sic dixit Jehova, In hoc scies quod ego sum Jehova: ecce, ego percutiam virga quæ in manu mea est aquam quæ est in flumine, et vertetur in sanguinem.

18. Pisces vero qui sunt in flumine morientur: et fœtebit flumen, et molestia afficientur Ægyptii, bibendo aquas ex flumine.

19. Et dixit Jehova ad Mosen, Dic ad Aharon, Tolle virgam tuam, et extende manum tuam super aquas Ægypti, super flumina eorum, super rivos et stagna eorum, et super omnem collectionem aquarum ipsorum: et fient sanguis, eritque sanguis per totam terram Ægypti in vasis ligneis et lapideis.

20. Et ita fecerunt Moses et Aharon sicuti præceperat Jehova. Et elevans baculum, percussit aquas quæ erant in flumine, coram oculis Pharaonis, et coram oculis servorum ejus. Et versæ sunt aquæ omnes quæ erant in flumine, in sanguinem.

21. Pisces etiam qui erant in flumine mortui sunt: et computruit flumen, ut non possent Ægyptii bibere aquas ex flumine: fuitque sanguis per totam terram Ægypti.

22. Sic etiam fecerunt præstigiatores Ægypti incantationibus suis: et obduruit cor Pharaonis, sicut loquutus fuerat Jehova.

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23. And Pharaoh turned and went into his house, neither did he set his heart to this also.
24. And all the Egyptians digged round about the river for water to drink; for they could not drink of the water of the river.
25. And seven days were fulfilled, after that the Lord had smitten the river.

23. Et revertens Pharao venit in domum suam: neque adjecit cor suum etiam ad hoc.
24. Foderunt autem omnes Ægyptii per circuitum fluminis, ut aquas biberent, quia non poterant bibere ex aquis fluminis.
25. Et completi sunt septem dies ex quo percussit Jehova fluvium.

14. *And the Lord said unto Moses.* Moses now begins to relate the two plagues which were inflicted upon Egypt before Pharaoh was induced to obey; and although there was something prodigious in the madness which strove against God's hand so powerfully constraining him, yet in the person of this single reprobate, the picture of human pride and rebellion, when it is not controlled by a spirit of tractableness, is presented to our view. Let the faithful then be admonished by this narrative diligently to beware, lest, by wantonly rebelling against God, they provoke a similar vengeance upon themselves. For the same Being who hardened Pharaoh's heart is the constant avenger of impiety, and, smiting His enemies with a spirit of confusion, renders them as furious as they are senseless. Moreover, lest Moses, stumbling against this obstacle, should desist from the course he had begun, God encourages him to the combat, as much as to say, that he had to contend with a very hard stone until it should be broken. Hearing that Pharaoh's heart was hardened, he might begin to waver, unless a hope of victory were shewn him from elsewhere. But since the obstinacy of this beast is indomitable, God arms His servant with new weapons, as much as to say, that he must be worn down though he could not be broken. But although to some the analogy may appear far-fetched, between the ten plagues and the ten precepts of the law, yet, in my opinion, it is probable, and agreeable to reason, that before God promulgated the law the wicked were smitten with as many plagues as He was about to give precepts to His people, that in this way He might confirm their authority. First, however, He commands Moses to take up the rod, and reminds him of the recent miracle that he may

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gird himself to the new conflict with greater confidence. Then, after the Hebrew manner, He more fully lays open what He had briefly touched upon; for, at first, no mention is made of Aaron, but God only announces to Moses what He would have done; then He explains that the hand of Aaron was to be interposed. Where God reminds them that the rod was lately turned into a serpent, He shews that we profit but little by His works, unless our faith gathers strength from them. Besides, when God denounces to Pharaoh what He is going to do, He renders him more inexcusable, because he is not awakened by threats to repentance. God indeed knew that this would be without success; but although he knows the disease to be incurable, He still ceases not to apply the remedies—not indeed such as will restore health, but such as will draw out the secret poison from the mind. Many are here at issue (*litigant*) with God, because He not only speaks to the deaf, but even, by admonishing or chastising them in vain, exasperates their malice more and more. But it is for us, when any appearance of unreasonableness perplexes us, reverently to adore the secret judgments of God and to be soberly wise. Meanwhile the event shews that God's threatenings do not fall ineffectually, but that the contempt of them doubles both the crime and the punishment.

19. *And the Lord spake unto Moses.* This is the more extended narrative of which I spoke; for Moses mentions nothing different from what went before, but explains more distinctly his mode of action in the performance of the miracle, namely, that what God had commanded was completed by the instrumentality of Aaron. There was a reason for commencing with this miracle, that the Egyptians might know that there was no safeguard for them in the resources upon which they prided themselves the most. We know what great wealth, defence, and conveniences arose to them from the Nile; thence came their abundant fisheries, thence the fertility of their whole country, which it irrigated in its inundation, a thing that in other lands is injurious; its navigation was most advantageous for their merchants, it was also a strong fortification to a good part of the kingdom.

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Therefore, in order to cast down the Egyptians from their principal dependence, He turns its waters into blood. Besides, because water is one of the two elements of which man's life consists, in depriving the Egyptians of one part of their life, He used the best and shortest method of humiliating their haughtiness, had they not been altogether intractable. He might, indeed, by a single breath, have dried up all the sources of water, and overwhelmed the whole nation by drought; but this would have been commonly believed to have happened by chance, or naturally, and therefore would have been a less apparent prodigy, whilst it would have shut up the way for others. It would, then, have been sufficient, by the terror of death it awakened, to turn them to the fear of God, unless their madness had been desperate. Moses enumerates, besides the river, the streams, and ponds, and pools of water; because, in different parts of the country, as well artificially as naturally, the Nile was so diffused, that scarcely any other country is provided in all directions with such an abundance of water; as though God should say, "It shall avail you nothing to possess such an immense supply of water; because you shall thirst as much as if the Nile were dry." He adds, "both in vessels of wood and in vessels of stone;" meaning, that in whatever kind of vessel they came to draw, they would find nothing but blood.

20. *And Moses and Aaron did so.* He repeats that what God threatened as to the death of the fish, and the stinking of the Nile, actually took place; that he may aggravate the sin of the king, who was unaffected by the manifold power of God. Still he immediately adds that his counsellors witnessed it also. Hence we may conjecture, that the same infatuation had pervaded the whole court. It was also proper that so memorable a circumstance should not only be known generally, but that its author should be seen by many eyes. But it was a sign of the reprobation of the whole nation, that there was none of all that multitude who laboured to correct the folly of the king. Whence also it appears that God confounds the wisdom of the world; for there was no nation which gloried more in its universal know-

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ledge; even as Isaiah reproaches them of their boast. (Is. xix. 11.) But we see in how shameful a manner, on the one hand proud, and on the other amazed, they betrayed not a single spark of sound intelligence.

22. *And the magicians of Egypt did so.* A question arises as to how the magicians could imitate Moses, when the material to work upon no longer remained; for, if there were no water left in Egypt, its transmutation was impossible. But I have no doubt but that, for the purpose of their illusion, pure and clear waters appeared for a little while, and then were changed into blood. For, since the season for concluding the contests was not yet arrived, doubtless God opened a way for Himself, until they reached their end. The supposition of Augustine[1] is a forced one, that the magicians took the water, which remained pure and unaltered among the habitations of the Israelites. I should more willingly accept what he says, that, perhaps the waters were smitten by them at the same instant, so that in one place the power of God shone forth, in another their deception prevailed—although the solution I have given is very sufficient. Whether the change were true or imaginary, I dare not decide; except that it is more in accordance with the delusions of Satan, that the eyes of the wicked were deceived. Nor is there any necessity to philosophize more subtilely with Augustine,[2] that there is a seminal principle infused into all created things, so that one species may generate another. We may rather take our stand on the teaching of Paul, that God sends strong delusion to ensnare the unbelievers with lies, because they refuse to embrace the truth, (2 Thess. ii. 11;) and I have already shewn from another passage of Moses, that, by the just judgment of God, false prophets perform signs and wonders. Moses, however, seems to hint that it was only an illusion, where he adds,

[1] Tom. iii., *pars prima*, p. 428; Quæstiones in Exodum, xxiii.; and tom. ii., p. 463; Ep. cxliii., in Marcellum, where he offers another explanation also, viz., that their miracle might have been wrought upon salt water.

[2] Vol. iii. pt. 1, p. 427, quæs. xxi. "Insunt enim corporeis rebus per omnia elementa mundi quædam occultæ seminariæ rationes, quibus, cum data fuerit opportunitas temporalis, atque causalis, prorumpunt in species debitas suis modis, et finibus."

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"the magicians did so *with their enchantments*;" as if the flashes, as of lightning, dazzled the eyes of the spectators; for this I have shewn to be the meaning of the word. Yet I do not question but that God altogether preserved His people from this calamity, so that these guests and strangers were supplied with the water of Egypt, whilst not a drop was left for the natives of the land. Thus was the king convicted of obstinacy, because he was not more attentive to observe this distinction; nay, he must have been doubly mad and foolish, to the destruction of himself and his kingdom, to set the delusion of the magicians against the power of God. But this often happens to the reprobate, that they rush eagerly as it were to their own destruction, whilst they are borne away by satanic impulse in opposition to God. Yet this was no slight temptation to God's servants, to see the ministers of Satan almost rivalling themselves. For, if God chose to bear witness to their deliverance by miracles,—when they saw their enemies endued with a similar power, how could their own vocation be ratified and sure? And indeed it is probable that their faith was shaken by these machinations; yet I count it certain that it did not yield and give way; for, if Moses had been overcome by doubt, he would have confessed it, as it was his custom to do. But God opened their eyes, so that they should regard with contempt the tricks and deceptions of the magicians; besides, the divine vision had shone upon them together with the word, so that it was no marvel that, thus supported, they should repel, or sustain, every assault with firmness.

23. *And Pharaoh turned.* In this word Moses teaches us that the hardness of heart, to which God had devoted Pharaoh, was voluntary; so that the sin rested in himself, nor did the secret appointment of God avail anything to lessen his culpability, for his folly is condemned, because he did not "set his heart to this also." Whence it follows that he was the author of his own obstinacy, because, being blinded by pride and contempt, he took no account of the glory of God. Thus the wicked, although as being vessels of wrath, they are cast of God into a reprobate mind, still harden themselves, because wittingly and wilfully they run

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against God, and thus their security, audacity, and perverseness take away from them the excuse of ignorance or error. Wherefore this example warns us not to slumber when God arouses us, but attentively to consider His works, which may instruct us to reverence and fear Him. The statement that the Egyptians dug wells for themselves increases the certainty of the miracle, as does also what is added as to the seven days; for if the corruption of the water had only been momentary, some suspicion of delusion might have crept in, which was removed both by the continued taste and appearance. Therefore it was said before, that the Egyptians would suffer inconvenience and pain[1] from the want of water; for thus I explain it, that they should be sorrowful and afflicted, viz., because they had nothing to drink.

CHAPTER EIGHTH.

1. And the Lord spake unto Moses, Go unto Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Let my people go, that they may serve me.

1. Dixit autem Jehova ad Mosen, Vade ad Pharaonem, et dic ad eum, Sic dicit Jehova, Dimitte populum meum ut serviant mihi.

2. And if thou refuse to let *them* go, behold, I will smite all thy borders with frogs:

2. Quod si tu renuis dimittere, ecce, ego percutio omnes terminos tuos ranis.

3. And the river shall bring forth frogs abundantly, which shall go up, and come into thine house, and into thy bed-chamber, and upon thy bed, and into the house of thy servants, and upon thy people, and into thine ovens, and into thy kneading-troughs:

3. Et scatebit flumen ranis, quæ ascendent, et intrabunt domum tuam, et conclave cubilis tui, et super lectum tuum, et in domum servorum tuorum, et in populum tuum, et in furnos tuos, et in panaria tua. (*Heb.* farinas tuas.)

4. And the frogs shall come up both on thee, and upon thy people, and upon all thy servants.

4. Itaque in te, et in populum tuum, et in omnes servos ascendent ranæ.

5. And the Lord spake unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Stretch forth thine hand with thy rod over the streams, over the rivers, and over the ponds, and cause frogs to come up upon the land of Egypt.

5. Et ait Jehova ad Mosen, Dic ad Aharon, Extende manum tuam cum virga tua super fluvios, super rivos, et super stagna, ut adducas ranas super terram Ægypti.

6. And Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt; and

6. Et extendit Aharon manum suam super aquas Ægypti, et ascen-

[1] He seems to allude to verse 18, which he translates "et molestia afficientur Ægyptii, bibendo aquas ex flumine."

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the frogs came up, and covered the land of Egypt.

7. And the magicians did so with their enchantments, and brought up frogs upon the land of Egypt.

derunt ranæ, operueruntque terram Ægypti.

7. Et sic fecerunt magi incantationibus suis: nempe adducendo ranas super terram Ægypti.

1. *And the Lord spake.* Again, as if the matter were only now begun, God demands of Pharaoh His own peculiar right, viz., that His people should serve Him, but out of the land of Egypt, that His worship might be separate and pure from all defilement, for He desired (as was before said) by this separation of His people to condemn the superstitions of the Egyptians. Meanwhile there was no excuse for the tyrant, when, with sacrilegious boldness, he presumed to deprive God of His just honour. Therefore, in refusing to let them go, he was declared not only to be cruel, but also a despiser of God. Threatening is also added, that at least he may, however unwillingly, be driven to obey; for thus must the stubborn be dealt with, who never are brought to duty except when forced by fear or punishment. Indeed, God sometimes also threatens His own servants, in order to stimulate their laziness; but especially is He more severe towards the perverse and disobedient. Thus is it said, (Ps. xviii. 26,) "With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself froward." This is the reason why He sanctions His command with threats[1] when He addresses Pharaoh. In this second plague there are, besides, two things to be remarked by us; for, *first*, God shews that the Egyptians had hitherto held their lives by a precarious tenure, as it were, because He had protected them from the incursion of frogs by His special mercy. We know that Egypt, on account of its many marshes, and the sluggish and almost stagnant Nile, was full of frogs and venomous animals; now, when great multitudes of them come forth suddenly, cover the surface of the fields, penetrate even to the houses and bed-chambers, and finally ascend even into the royal palace, it plainly appears that they were before only restrained by God's hand, and thus that the God of the Hebrews was the guardian and keeper

[1] In the *Fr.* the word here used is *miracles*, probably a misprint for *menaces*.

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of that kingdom. *Secondly,* God chose not only to inflict a punishment upon the Egyptians, but to expose them to mockery by its ignominious nature; nor can we doubt but that their pain must have been much embittered by this contumely, when they saw that they were thus evil-entreated not by some victorious army, but by filthy reptiles; and besides this, that their calamity had its origin in the Nile, which enriched their country with so many advantages. But let us learn from this history that there are many deaths mixed up with our life, and that it is not otherwise lengthened out to us, except as God restrains the dangers which everywhere beset us; and again, although He may not openly strike us with lightning from heaven, nor arm his angels for the destruction of men, still, at His slightest nod, all creatures are ready to execute His judgments; and, therefore, we must ascribe it to His kindness and long-suffering, if the wicked do not perish at each moment. Finally, if we are ever galled by ignominy or disgrace, let us remember that this happens designedly, that the shame itself may mortify our pride.

5. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, Say unto Aaron.* It is questionable whether God thus enjoined Moses in a continuous address, or whether He waited until Pharaoh contumaciously despised His command. It is probable, indeed, that after Pharaoh had paid no attention to the threats, the execution of the punishment was commanded. Meantime, we must recollect what I before said, that Moses moved not even a finger; but, as he had been commanded, transferred the active measures to his inferior minister, that thus Pharaoh might be treated more contemptuously. It was thus that he overwhelmed the whole land, as it were, by a breath. But although in this way God cast down the fierce tyrant in his swelling pride to be trampled beneath their feet, still the wickedness of the magicians did not rest. Thus was it requisite that the servants of God should be exercised by constant contests one after another.

8. Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said, Entreat the Lord, that he may take away the

8. Tunc vocavit Pharao Mosen et Aharon, ac dixit, Precamini Jehovam ut auferat ranas a me et a po-

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frogs from me, and from my people; and I will let the people go, that they may do sacrifice unto the Lord.

9. And Moses said unto Pharaoh, Glory over me: when shall I entreat for thee, and for thy servants, and for thy people, to destroy the frogs from thee and thy houses, *that* they may remain in the river only?

10. And he said, To-morrow. And he said, *Be it* according to thy word; that thou mayest know that *there is* none like unto the Lord our God.

11. And the frogs shall depart from thee, and from thy houses, and from thy servants, and from thy people; they shall remain in the river only.

12. And Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh; and Moses cried unto the Lord because of the frogs which he had brought against Pharaoh.

13. And the Lord did according to the word of Moses; and the frogs died out of the houses, out of the villages, and out of the fields.

14. And they gathered them together upon heaps; and the land stank.

15. But when Pharaoh saw that there was respite, he hardened his heart, and hearkened not unto them; as the Lord had said.

pulo meo: et dimittam populum, ut sacrificent Jehovæ.

9. Et dixit Moses Pharaoni, Gloriare super me quando orabo pro te, et pro servis tuis et pro populo tuo, ut exscindantur ranæ a te, et a domibus tuis: tantum in flumine residuæ sint.

10. Et ait, Cras. Tunc ille dixit, Secundum sermonem tuum, ut scias quod nullus sit sicut Jehova Deus noster.

11. Recedent igitur ranæ abs te et a domibus tuis, et a servis tuis, et a populo tuo: tantum in flumine residuæ erunt.

12. Tunc egressus est Moses et Aharon a Pharaone. Et clamavit Moses ad Jehovam super causa ranarum, quas immiserat Pharaoni.

13. Et fecit Jehova secundum sermonem Mosis. Itaque mortuæ sunt ranæ ex domibus, ex atriis, et ex agris.

14. Et coacervarunt eas turmatim: et computruit terra.

15. Videns autem Pharao quod esset relaxatio, aggravavit cor suum: neque audivit eos, sicuti loquutus erat Jehova.

8. *Then Pharaoh called for Moses.* Pharaoh at last appears to be softened, and to lay aside some of his fierceness; but it will soon appear that he was not really tamed. It may indeed have been that, seized with terror, he seriously took refuge in cries for pardon; but that he lied to God, and to himself, is plain from his very inconstancy; because, as soon as a reprieve was granted, he returned to his natural disposition, nay, he effectively manifested that his malice was only repressed by fear, since it presently began to vent itself again. Thus do hypocrites, when they are beneath God's afflicting hand, or tremble under the apprehension of His chastenings, humbly and submissively implore His mercy; but when the evil has been withdrawn for a little while, this

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short truce puffs up their hearts, as if they had attained an eternal peace. The Prophet complains in the psalm, that thus also it happened with the Jews, "When he slew them, then they sought him; and they returned and inquired early after God; and they remembered that God was their rock, and the high God their redeemer; nevertheless, they did but flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues; for their heart was not right with him, neither were they steadfast in his covenant." (Ps. lxxviii. 34-37.) In fine, this is a disease common to all hypocrites, that, having found by experience their frowardness to be destructive to them, they feign penitence for the sake of obtaining pardon, because they cannot escape the judgments of God; but, when they fancy themselves escaped, they hasten back to the same pride, they kick against God, and even wantonly insult Him; in a word, it is only their trouble that humbles them and that only for a short time. But although Pharaoh's fear extorted this from him, that he sought for Moses to entreat for him, and was anxious to appease God, yet was it a token of his deceitful and double mind, that he made it, as it were, a bargain, that the frogs should be taken away before he let the people go. His impiety, therefore, lay concealed in his heart, so long as he thought that he could not defy God with impunity; but, relying confidently on impunity, he manifested his deceit and perfidy. Although it was not with any sincere feeling of repentance that he now humbly speaks of Jehovah by name, yet it shews that the stoutness of his spirit was broken, of which mention was made before, when he inquired in mockery, "Who is the Lord?"

9. *And Moses said unto Pharaoh.* Commentators differ as to the meaning of this passage. They are too speculative who expound it, that this honour was granted to Pharaoh, that he should fix the time in which Moses was to pray. Again, there is a flatness in the exposition, that Pharaoh might glory because the frogs were to die. Those who expound it, that Pharaoh should be freed from the frogs, so that he might glory in safety, express part of the meaning, but not the whole. It rather appears to me that there is an

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implied *antithesis* between the perverse boasting, wherewith Pharaoh had exulted, and that pious glorying which he ought to seek for in the mercy of God; as if Moses had said, "Thus far you have exalted yourself improperly, trusting in your power, and afterwards when bewitched by the enchantments; now rather glory, because you have an intercessor and patron to plead for you to God." For it was needful that the arrogance, which had so falsely elevated him, that he dared to contend with God, should be crushed, and that no hope should be left him, save in the mercy of God. But to "glory over" Moses, means that he should seek his glory in the advocacy of Moses, and should account it a very great happiness that he should deign to interpose for his reconciliation with God. For the *particle* עַל,[1] *gnal*, is often so taken. Yet Moses by no means wished to detract at all from the glory of God; but (as I have lately said) desiring to humble the pride of the haughty king, he told him that nothing would be better and more glorious for him than to have a good hope of pardon, when he had obtained as his advocate the servant of the living God, whom he so cordially hated. He only affirms that the frogs should "remain in the river;" as much as to say that they should be content with their ordinary habitation and bounds; for we know that frogs, although they sometimes jump out on the bank, still do not go far from the water, because they are nourished by humidity. Thus he hints that they were let loose by God's command to cover the ground, and that it was still in His power, if He chose, that they should invade the fields and houses again in new multitudes; and that it must be ascribed to His blessing, if they kept themselves in the waters, and did not make incursions beyond their own boundaries.

10. *And he said, To-morrow.* If you refer this to Moses, there is ambiguity in the sense; but, it being probable that they were Pharaoh's words, I think that he is asking for a

[1] עַל. Instances in which this particle has the meaning attributed to it by *C.*, may be seen in Ps. xxxvii. 4, first clause; and in Job xxvii. 10. Noldius has also observed that עָלַי, the form in which it here occurs, has the meaning of mihi curæ, mihi incumbit, in Judg. xix. 20, Ps. cxvi. 12, Prov. vii. 14, and 2 Sam. xviii. 11. Concord. particularum, עַל, 34.—*W.*

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respite till to-morrow, before he lets the people go. For they fall into an absurdity, who think that he asked Moses to drive away the frogs by his prayers on the morrow, as if Pharaoh went quietly to sleep, and put off the remedy of the evil. There is, then, no pretence for understanding it, that Pharaoh, as if his mind were quite tranquil and unmoved, desired to have his land delivered from the frogs on the following day: but rather it means, that if he be released from this difficulty, he promises the discharge of the people, but yet suspends it till the next day, for the purpose of deceit. For there was no other reason for this procrastination, except that, having obtained what he wanted, he might depart from his engagement, as he actually did; but Moses, satisfied with this promise, undertakes to bring it about that God should disperse the frogs; and this, I doubt not, was performed on the same day. For this was the cause of the tyrant's changing his determination, that, by the interposition of the night, his fear departed. And, certainly, it is gathered from the following words, that the frogs were soon after removed; for it is said that Moses and Aaron prayed after they had gone out; which would be but little in accordance with the notion, that the next day was waited for. It is not by any rash or presumptuous impulse that Moses affirms that Pharaoh should obtain his desire; because it appears from his success that he was assured of its being God's will. Thus often are the prophets, although no spoken revelation may intervene, directed nevertheless by the secret inspiration of the Spirit. In this confidence, also, Moses declares that Pharaoh should know that there is none other God to be compared with the God of Israel. This, moreover, is the true knowledge of God, when whatsoever lifts itself up to obscure His glory, is reduced to its proper level, and every high thing yields or is cast down, so that He alone may be exalted.

15. *But when Pharaoh saw.* Hence it appears that the wretched tyrant, like a winding serpent, twisted and turned his mind to crooked counsels; for when he was trembling beneath the present feeling of God's power, he dared not obstinately resist any longer; he only sought a little breath-

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ing time; now, being freed from fear, he returns to his former contumacy. But this is a sign of a perverse and crooked disposition, not to submit willingly, but to pay only a temporary deference, when necessity is more than usually urgent. God foreknew, and had foretold to Moses, that this perfidy was hidden in the recesses of his heart; but he was willing to bring it to light, and therefore remitted the punishment; and hence was the opportunity for dissembling.

16. And the Lord said unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Stretch out thy rod, and smite the dust of the land, that it may become lice throughout all the land of Egypt.

17. And they did so: for Aaron stretched out his hand with his rod, and smote the dust of the earth, and it became lice in man and in beast: all the dust of the land became lice throughout all the land of Egypt.

18. And the magicians did so with their enchantments to bring forth lice, but they could not: so there were lice upon man and upon beast.

19. Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh, This *is* the finger of God: and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he hearkened not unto them; as the Lord had said.

16. Tunc dixit Jehova ad Mosen, Loquere ad Aharon, Extende virgam tuam, et percute pulverem terræ, ut sit in pediculos per totam terram Ægypti.

17. Et fecerunt sic: et extendit Aharon manum suam cum virga sua, et percussit pulverem terræ: ut fuit in pediculos in homine et jumento, totus pulvis terræ fuit in pediculos per universam terram Ægypti.

18. Et sic fecerunt magi incantationibus suis ut producerent pediculos: sed non potuerunt.

19. Tunc dixerunt magi ad Pharaonem, Digitus Dei est hic. Et roboratum fuit cor Pharaonis, nec audivit eos, sicut loquutus erat Jehova.

16. *And the Lord said unto Moses.* In this place again, as before, Aaron is commanded to act as the inferior of Moses in punishing the tyrant; and this as being more ignominious than as if Moses alone had been employed. The nature of this third plague is very remarkable. God troubles Egypt not only with frogs, but with lice; for although the Hebrews are not entirely agreed as to the כנם, *kinim*, yet they admit that they were little animals or insects, which produced shame together with annoyance even to the meanest of men. We see then how magnificently God trampled upon the pride of Egypt, by inflicting a punishment full of affront and disgrace; for although it would have been painful to sink under a powerful and warlike enemy, yet was it far more sad to be basely destroyed by lice. Nor can we doubt that God prepared such an army as this, principally

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that He might openly manifest how easily He can bring to nought in derision all earthly strength and power. And surely, unless the Egyptians had been something more than stupid and beside themselves, this calculation would have come into their minds; what would hereafter happen, if the Maker of heaven and earth should apply Himself to their destruction with all His might, when they perceived themselves to be wasted away in this almost ludicrous contest with Him? But let us learn from this history, that all creatures are ready at God's lightest command, whenever He chooses to make use of them to chastise His enemies; and again, that no animal is so vile and contemptible as not to have the power of doing injury when God employs it; and, finally, that reprobates obtain this at last by their proud doings, viz., that they are, with the greatest infamy, made to yield to the worms themselves, or to lice.

18. *And the magicians did so.* They "did" is here put for "they tried to do;" for they did not succeed, as presently appears. They are therefore said to have done, what they in vain attempted, or what they essayed, but without success. And in this way God took away from Pharaoh whatever excuse remained, under pretext of being deceived; for although he had previously himself sought for these deceptions, still his obstinacy was not without colour of excuse, as long as the magicians rivalled Moses in the contention; but when he sees their art fail, he professedly sets himself in opposition to God. Although it was not with reference to him alone that God restrained these impostors, but He exposes them to the ridicule of all, in order to assert altogether for Himself alone the glory of perfect power. Hence we gather how well, according to His inestimable wisdom, He represses whatever license He for a time permits to the ministers of Satan; for when, by bearing with their audacity, He has sufficiently proved the faith of His people, He compels them to stop abruptly, as it were, that they may sink in confusion, and "proceed no further," as Paul says, when recounting this history. (2 Tim. iii. 9.)

19. *Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh.* It is probable that they were reproved harshly, because they had

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come to a stop in their rivalry with the servants of God; wherefore they excuse themselves by saying, that there is no more room for their wisdom and magical arts. We gather from hence that they had so been able to delude by their sorceries, that they thought themselves very good and praiseworthy artificers of deception. For on no other account had the people accounted them wise than because they had themselves first attained this confidence; therefore they oppose the finger of God to their subtlety and skill, as much as to say, that there is no longer any question as to the excellence of their art, but that whatever could be required from astrologers and masters of juggling, was now brought to nought by the extraordinary power of God. They do indeed contradict themselves; because what could have been their object in contending with Moses and Aaron, except they had boasted that God was on their side? But if they had been acting under the auspices of God, how ridiculous was it to confess that those, whom they had before opposed, were their superiors, and to accord them the praise of the victory, because they were endued with power from God? We see then how infatuated they were with all their cunning. But in the meantime we must recollect what I have lately glanced at, that they not only led others into error, but were also deceived, because they thought there was some science in the deceptions of their magic; as now-a-days we see that the fortune-tellers and other impostors, who call themselves judicial astrologers, so pride themselves in their follies, as to have no hesitation in taking the first rank amongst the learned. Besides, ambition itself impelled the magicians to say, that God wrought by the hand of Moses; for they were ashamed to confess that any human being excelled them in wisdom. But the confession was extorted from them, that they might greatly magnify the glory of the one true God, and at the same time bear witness to the legitimate vocation of Moses; for if the power of God is manifested conspicuously in Moses, it follows that he is a true and divine Prophet. But, because He does not equally work in them, but brings their efforts to confusion, it may thence be concluded that they are enemies of God.

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That they should have contended unsuccessfully, and have been foiled in the midst of their attempts, was sufficient to restrain their vanity; but this was much worse, that they should make out God to be the enemy of their art. It is true that they spoke this inconsiderately, because they only wished to consult their own fame, and to defend the false honours of their learning; but it pleased God thus to convict them, so that Pharaoh should perceive that he had entered into contention with the living God, and not with two ordinary men. As to the form of expression, it is clearly metaphorical; for in Luke's Gospel the Spirit is called "the finger of God," (Luke xi. 20;) as likewise, in many passages, the same Spirit is intended by "the hand of God." Still, we must mark the reason, lest any unlearned person should take it literally, as if the Spirit, who truly is Eternal God, were but some portion of the Divinity.[1] But since the magicians were compelled at length to recognise God's power in the miracle, our folly will be worse than base if this same consideration does not obtain with us. Although it becomes us to acknowledge the hand of God in two ways; for neither when He acts by means, (as it is called,) does He detract from Himself at all; and, therefore, His hand may be seen with the eyes of faith in the whole course of nature; but, since He stirs up our indifference by miracles, therein it shines forth more conspicuously. Because, however, we shall soon see that the magicians did not therefore repent of their folly, let us learn sincerely and cordially to humble ourselves beneath God's powerful hand, as soon as it appears. That Pharaoh, when deserted by the magicians, did not cease at all from his obstinacy, is a proof to us that, however wickedness may seek for its support in different directions, still the corruption is implanted within, which is of itself at enmity with God.

20. And the Lord said unto Moses, Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh, (lo, he

20. Tunc dixit Jehova ad Mosen, Surge mane, ac te siste in conspectum Pharaonis: Ecce egredietur ad

[1] In the *Fr.* there is the following addition:—"C'est dont selon nostre infirmité que la vertu essentielle de Dieu est appellee sa main ou son doigt;" it is then in reference to our infirmity that the essential virtue of God is called His hand, or His finger.

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cometh forth to the water,) and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Let my people go, that they may serve me:

21. Else, if thou wilt not let my people go, behold, I will send swarms *of flies* upon thee, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people, and into thy houses: and the houses of the Egyptians shall be full of swarms *of flies*, and also the ground whereon they *are*.

22. And I will sever in that day the land of Goshen, in which my people dwell, that no swarms *of flies* shall be there; to the end thou mayest know that I *am* the Lord in the midst of the earth.

23. And I will put a division between my people and thy people: to-morrow shall this sign be.

24. And the Lord did so: and there came a grievous swarm *of flies* into the house of Pharaoh, and *into* his servants' houses, and into all the land of Egypt: the land was corrupted by reason of the swarm *of flies*.

25. And Pharaoh called for Moses and for Aaron, and said, Go ye, sacrifice to your God in the land.

26. And Moses said, It is not meet so to do; for we shall sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians to the Lord our God: lo, shall we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, and will they not stone us?

27. We will go three days' journey into the wilderness, and sacrifice to the Lord our God, as he shall command us.

aquas: et dices ad eum, Sic ait Jehova, Dimitte populum meum ut serviant mihi.

21. Quod si tu non dimiseris populum meum, ecce emittam in te, et in servos tuos, et in populum tuum, et in domos tuas examen insectorum: et replebuntur domus Ægyptiorum insectorum examine, atque etiam terra super quam illa extiterint.

22. Et separabo in die illa terram Gosen, in qua populus meus habitat, ne sit illic examen insectorum, ut scias quod ego sum Jehova in medio terræ.

23. Et ponam redemptionem inter populum meum, et inter populum tuum: Cras erit signum hoc.

24. Et fecit Jehova sic: et venit examen insectorum grave in domum Pharaonis, et domum servorum ejus, et totam terram Ægypti: corrupta fuit terra propter examen insectorum.

25. Tunc vocavit Pharao Mosen et Aharon, et ait, Ite, sacrificate Deo vestro in hac terra.

26. Et dixit Moses, Non convenit facere sic: quia abominationem Ægypti sacrificaremus Jehovæ Deo nostro. Ecce, si sacrificaremus abominationem Ægyptiorum coram oculos eorum, annon lapidarent nos?

27. Viam trium dierum progrediemur in desertum, et sacrificabimus Jehovæ Deo nostro, quemadmodum præcepit nobis.

20. *And the Lord said unto Moses, Rise up early.* As Pharaoh advances in daring rashness, so does God on the other hand proceed to restrain his impetuosity by opposing impediments. This is what the wicked at length obtain by long and multiplied contention, that having received many wounds they perish by various torments. With respect to the command that Moses should meet Pharaoh, when he shall go down in the morning to the river-side for his plea-

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sure, it is uncertain whether God would have the tyrant encountered in public, because the palace was difficult of access; although it seems probable to me, that a place was chosen in which the proceeding would be more manifest, and where the voice of His messenger would be more clearly heard. Therefore, that nothing might be done secretly, Moses proclaims in open day, before the whole multitude, that judgment of God, which immediately afterwards took effect. But here no mention is made of the rod, as in the former plagues; because God sometimes makes use of external instruments, that we may know that all creatures are in His hand, and are wielded according to His will; but sometimes acts independently of them, that we may know that He needs no such assistance. This varied mode of action demonstrates that He subjects all things to His empire as He pleases, and yet that He is contented with His own power. This plague has some affinity to the two previous ones, inasmuch as its infliction is attended with ignominy, which may put the tyrant to shame. The Hebrew word ערב,[1] *gnarob*, means the same as the Latin "*examen insectorum*," a swarm of insects. Many interpreters think that there was a mixture of various kinds; and this I do not reject, since it is probable that their foul odour was multiplied, so as almost to suffocate the tyrant. Those who explain it as describing bears, lions, tigers, wolves, and other wild beasts, depart without any reason from the genuine meaning of the word.

22. *And I will sever.* Although this had not been expressly declared as yet, still it must be extended to the other plagues; for it is certain, that when God inflicted punishment on the Egyptians, He did not proceed promiscuously against all men; and, therefore, that His chosen people, in whose behalf He acted, were free from all inconvenience. But now perhaps for the first time this distinction is made

[1] The root ערב, means *commingling*, and the producing of confusion thereby. Hence evening is called ערב, from the mingling together of day and night; and the same name is given to a mixed crowd; and possibly to a confused swarm of insects. The LXX. have taken it for the name of some particular kind of fly in this instance; whilst *S. M.* has mentioned certain Rabbies, as affirming that it here means a mingled crowd of wild beasts.—*W.*

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more evident to Pharaoh, whereas before the peculiar grace of God had not been known to him. From hence, however, it was more than plain, that mercies and punishments were in the power of the one God of Israel, so that He might spare His own people, and treat them kindly and paternally, whilst, on the other hand, He exercised vengeance against His enemies. Wherefore He adds, "to the end thou mayest know that I am the Lord God in the midst of the earth." There is an implied *antithesis* here, which casts down all idols, and exalts the God of Israel alone. But although "the earth" may be here taken for the whole habitable globe, it will be properly confined to Egypt, as if God affirmed that He was supreme in the midst of Egypt, or everywhere throughout all Egypt, which means the same. The expression which follows, although somewhat harsh, yet contains no ambiguity. God is said to have "put a redemption between his people and the Egyptians;"[1] because, as if He had erected barriers, or set up a fence to preserve one corner in safety, He had withholden His favour from the whole surrounding district. Moreover, because the word פלה,[2] *phelo*, signifies to be admirable, or to be concealed, some interpreters translate it, "I will render admirable[3] the land of Goshen;" but I have preferred following the more usual rendering which appears to be most appropriate. Lastly, it is to be observed that time for repentance is again given to Pharaoh, so that, if he were curable, he might prevent the punishment denounced against him: for God might have sent the insects at the moment; but He assigns the morrow, to prove the wickedness of the tyrant.

25. *And Pharaoh called for Moses.* Pharaoh imagines that he is granting a great thing, if the Israelites are permitted to offer sacrifice to God in Egypt. He and all his people should have humbly embraced the worship of God,

[1] Verse 23, "And I will put a division," *marg.*, "redemption."—*A. V.*

[2] פלה, is *to separate, to distinguish by marks of* favour. פלא, to be *wonderful*, or *inscrutable*. The derivatives from these kindred roots are, however, not always distinguishable; and in this instance *S. M.* and the *V.* have rendered הפליתי, as *C.* mentions, assuming it to be irregularly formed from פלא.—*W.*

[3] *French*, "miraculeuse."

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and casting away their superstitions should have sought to Moses as their instructor in sincere piety. He departs from none of their common vices; he does not renounce his idols nor forsake his former errors; but only permits God to be worshipped in one part of his kingdom. But this is customary with the reprobate, to think that they have sufficiently done their duty, when they yield ever so little to God. Hence it arises, that when they are conquered and compelled, still they would not hesitate to detract somewhat from the rights of God; nay, if they might do so with impunity, they would willingly rob Him of all. And in fact as long as fortune[1] is propitious, and they enjoy a state of prosperity and safety, they deprive God, as much as may be, of all His glory; but when the power of resisting fails them, they so descend to submission as to defraud Him of half His due honour. God had commanded a free departure to be conceded to His people; Pharaoh does not obey this command, but endeavours to satisfy God in another way, viz., by not forbidding them to offer sacrifice in Egypt. This sin, which was common in all ages, is now-a-days too clearly manifest. Our Pharaohs would altogether extinguish God's glory, and this they madly set themselves to compass; but when reduced to extremities, if there be no further use in professedly contending with Him, they maim and mutilate His worship by a fictitious course, which they call a reformation. Hence arose that mixture of light and darkness, which was named "the Interim."[2] Nor do the enemies of the truth cease to obtrude thus ridiculously upon God their empty and unreal expiations.

[1] Ils ont vent en pouppe.—*Fr.*

[2] The document called the *Interim*, drawn up at the suggestion of Charles V., and published at the Diet of Augsburg in 1548, was professedly a measure of mutual concession, prescribing what was to be believed in the *interim*, "until all could be established by a general council." In reality, however, it was opposed to the Reformation on all the main points of dispute; and conceded nothing but that married priests should retain their cures, and that, where the cup had been again given to the laity, it might be continued. It is printed at length in *Osiander*, Ecc. Hist., cent. xvi., lib. ii. c. 72; and a copious summary of its contents is given by *Fleury*, liv. 145. See *Robertson's* Charles V., and *Stokes's* continuation of *Milner*. See also *Calvin's Tracts*, Calv. Soc., vol. iii., on the Adultero-German *Interim*.

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26. *And Moses said.* The word כֵּן,[1] *kon*, which Moses here uses, has a wide signification; for the Hebrews say of whatever they do not approve, that it is not right (*rectum.*) Therefore almost all the interpreters agree in this, that Pharaoh demanded what was by no means equitable, because he would have exposed the Israelites to be stoned by his people. If this opinion be admitted, we must read the passage connectedly, that it was not in accordance with reason, that the Israelites should sacrifice in Egypt in a strange manner, because the novelty would not be tolerated. There are two clauses in the sentence; one, that it was not right for them to offer in Egypt a sacrifice to God, which was abominable to the inhabitants themselves, or to offer a profane sacrifice of the abominations of the heathen; the other, that there was a danger of the Israelites being stoned, if they provoked the Egyptians by a ceremony, which was detestable to them. As to the second clause, there is no doubt that "the abomination of the Egyptians" is taken actively for the sacrifices which they abominate. The same seems to be the meaning of the first clause; for it would be harsh to interpret the same forms of expression differently within a few words of each other; except that the name of Jehovah, put in opposition as it is to "the abomination," seems to require a passive signification. For Moses says emphatically, that "it is not right to sacrifice the abomination of Egypt to Jehovah the God of Israel." If this view be adopted, "the abomination" will be the profanation of true and pure worship, wherewith the sacred ceremonies of the Egyptians were defiled; as much as to say, that it was unlawful to mix up the worship of the true God with such sacrilege. And, in fact, Moses seems to contend with a twofold argument; first, that it was not right, secondly, that it was not expedient. Take this, then, as the first reason, that a sacrifice which should be polluted by the abominations of Egypt, would neither be lawful nor pleasing to God; the second will follow after, that the Egyptians would not tolerate it; because they would

[1] *C.* adopts the translation of *S. M.*, instead of that found in the *V.*, and gives his readers the short note of *S. M.*, "Non convenit, sive non est rectum."—*W.*

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conceive both themselves and their gods to be grievously insulted, if their accustomed mode of sacrificing should be violated. This interpretation is fuller, and contains fuller doctrine, if Moses, first of all, was solicitous as to the honour of God, and did not regard the advantage of the people only; and in this sentiment, that the true God could not be duly worshipped unless when separated from all idols, there is nothing forced. But, since in the same verse "the abomination of the Egyptians" is taken actively, it will be well, in order that the construction may be more easy, to expound it thus in both places. Then the sense of the first clause will be, it is not consistent to expose the worship of our God to the reproaches and sneers of the Gentiles; which would be the case, if the Egyptians should see us honouring a sacrificial ceremony which they abominate. I do not, indeed, assent to their opinion, who will not admit the passage to consist of two clauses, but read it connectedly thus—that it was not right to do this, because the Egyptians would stone the Israelites. For Moses not only had regard to what was best for the people, but primarily to what would please God, viz., that His holy name should not be profaned. I see no foundation in reason for restraining, as is usually done, the word "abomination" to the animals of sacrifice; and, therefore, I extend it to the whole operation of sacrificing.[1]

27. *We will go three days' journey.* This is the conclusion that no change must be made in God's command, but that His injunction must be obeyed simply, and without exception. Nor is there little praise due to the firmness of Moses, who so boldly and unreservedly rejected the pretended moderation of the tyrant, because it would have somewhat interfered with the will of God. He therefore declares that the Israelites would do no otherwise than as God had prescribed.

28. And Pharaoh said, I will let you go, that ye may sacrifice to the Lord your God in the wilderness; only ye shall not go very far away: entreat for me.

28. Tunc dixit Pharao, Ego dimittam vos ut sacrificetis Jehovæ Deo vestro: veruntamen non longius pergetis eundo: orate pro me.

[1] "For the Egyptians worshipped divers beasts, as the ox, the sheep, and such like, which the Israelites offered in sacrifice; which things the Egyptians abhorred to see."—*Geneva Version, in loco.*

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29. And Moses said, Behold, I go out from thee, and I will entreat the Lord that the swarms *of flies* may depart from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people, to-morrow: but let not Pharaoh deal deceitfully any more in not letting the people go to sacrifice to the Lord.

30. And Moses went out from Pharaoh, and entreated the Lord.

31. And the Lord did according to the word of Moses; and he removed the swarms *of flies* from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people: there remained not one.

32. And Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also, neither would he let the people go.

29. Et dixit Moses, Ecce, ego egrediar a te, et rogabo Jehovam ut recedat examen insectorum a Pharaone, et a servis ejus, et a populo ejus cras. Veruntamen non adjiciat Pharao agere fallaciter, non dimittendo populum ut sacrificet Jehovæ.

30. Tunc egressus est Moses a Pharaone, et oravit ad Jehovam.

31. Et fecit Jehova secundum verbum Mosis, et recessit mixtura insectorum a Pharaone, et a populo ejus: non unum fuit residuum.

32. Et aggravavit Pharao cor suum etiam hac vice, nec dimisit populum.

28. *And Pharaoh said, I will let you go.* When he sees that his delays and shifts avail him nothing, he professes entire obedience; not that he then proposed to deceive and lie, because he was prevented by fear; but only, because overwhelmed with a present sense of his calamity, he dared not raise his crest against God. Therefore (as I said before) he did not so much wish designedly to conciliate and frustrate Moses by falsehood, as he deceived himself. For we must observe that (like one who has a wolf by the ears) he was constrained to promise the dismissal of the people, whom he retained to his own great injury. And this is why he commends himself to their prayers, for necessity urged him to implore God's pardon and peace: although it might have been that he desired craftily to engage their affection to himself under the pretext of religion. For by this anxious precaution for himself, he betrays his want of confidence. Finally, by requesting their prayers, he, as it were, throws out a rope by which he may draw them back to himself when the sacrifice was over.

29. *And Moses said, Behold I go out from thee.* Moses does not reply to this demand, because he knew that the design of God was otherwise; and God had justly left him in ignorance as to what He did not yet wish him to know. There is, then, no reason why Moses should be accused of bad faith when he faithfully fulfilled the charge committed to him;

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although he was silent as to what he was not ordered to declare, even as to that which God wished to be concealed from the tyrant. But the holy Prophet, aroused to pious indignation by the king's perfidy, does not immediately remove the plague, but waits till the morrow; and moreover, denounces with severity that, if he should persist in deceit, its punishment awaited him. This great magnanimity he had derived from the miracles, for, having experienced in them the unconquerable power of God, he had no cause for fear. For it was an act of extraordinary boldness openly and before the tyrant's face to reproach him for his falsehoods, and at the same time to threaten him with punishment unless he desisted from them. But we said before that Moses had not acted from the workings of his own mind, when he promised Pharaoh what he asked, but that he had spoken thus confidently from special impulse. For the general promise in which God affirms that He will grant the prayers of His servants, must not be applied to particular cases, so that they should expect to obtain this or that in a specified manner, unless they have some peculiar testimony from the word or the Spirit of God.

31. *And the Lord did according to the word of Moses.* "The word" here may be expounded either of the answer, or the prayer, of Moses. The former pleases me best, viz., that by the result God proved that He ratified what Moses had said, whom He had made the proclaimer of His judgment; but if any one prefer to refer it to his prayer, let him retain his opinion. When he adds that the "heart of the king was hardened at this time also," he aggravates the crime of his obstinacy, since there was no bound to his rebellion under such a series of punishments, by which even an iron heart should have been corrected.

CHAPTER NINTH.

1. Then the Lord said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh, and tell him, Thus saith the Lord God of the Hebrews, Let my people go, that they may serve me.

1. Tunc dixit Jehova ad Mosen, Vade ad Pharaonem, et loquere ad eum, Sic dicit Jehova Deus Hebræorum, Dimitte populum meum ut serviant mihi.

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2. For if thou refuse to let *them* go, and wilt hold them still,

3. Behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thy cattle which *is* in the field, upon the horses, upon the asses, upon the camels, upon the oxen, and upon the sheep: *there shall be* a very grievous murrain.

4. And the Lord shall sever between the cattle of Israel and the cattle of Egypt: and there shall nothing die of all *that is* the children's of Israel.

5. And the Lord appointed a set time, saying, To-morrow the Lord shall do this thing in the land.

6. And the Lord did that thing on the morrow, and all the cattle of Egypt died: but of the cattle of the children of Israel died not one.

7. And Pharaoh sent, and, behold, there was not one of the cattle of the Israelites dead. And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people go.

2. Quod si tu renuis eum dimittere, et adhuc tu retines eos:

3. Ecce, manus Jehovæ erit super gregem tuum qui est in agro: in equis, in asinis, in camelis, in armentis et in ovibus pestis gravissima.

4. Et distinguet Jehova inter pecora Israel, et inter pecora Ægypti: ut non moriatur quicquam eorum quæ sunt apud filios Israel.

5. Et statuit Jehova tempus, dicendo, Cras faciet Jehova rem hanc in terra.

6. Fecit itaque Jehova rem hanc postero die: et mortuum est omne pecus Ægypti: de pecore vero filiorum Israel ne unum quidem *animal* mortuum est.

7. Et misit Pharao: et ecce, ex pecore Israel ne unum quidem *animal* mortuum erat. Et aggravatum fuit cor Pharaonis, ut non dimitteret populum.

1. *Then the Lord said.* No complaint or expostulation of Moses is here recounted; and it is possible that he was quiet and silent, whilst God foresaw what it was necessary to do, and even commanded what He would have done. But since he only gives a brief summary of occurrences, we may probably conjecture that, as the evil grew worse, he had recourse from time to time to the remedy. In the denunciation, "the Lord God of the Hebrews" is no unmeaning repetition, that Pharaoh may learn that He, whom he thought to have repelled in the abundance of his pride, was still in the field against him. For God insults his ferocity, and by setting forth his name contemptuously defies his wrath. We have already said that Pharaoh is convicted of sacrilege, both in his oppression of God's people and in defrauding God Himself of His due honour; therefore those words, "Let my people go, that they may serve me," have the force of aggravating his sin.

2. *But if thou refuse.* God again urges him to obedience through fear of punishment, as He usually deals with the froward. Yet He permits him a short space of time for re-

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pentance, (as before,) if perchance he may lay aside his perverse determination to refuse. And this Moses now relates more distinctly in the fifth verse, both to shew the extreme obstinacy of his malice, because the tyrant mocks at God's forbearance, and follows his own lust; and also to manifest more clearly from the circumstance of time, that the cattle of Egypt were smitten not by chance but by the hand of God. There is also an implied reproof of his senseless obstinacy, as though Moses said, that God was already enough, and more than enough, provoked; and therefore, unless he should desist, that God had new and more terrible plagues at hand, whereby He would overwhelm him. The murrain is appositely called God's "hand," because it arose from His just judgment; for this expression is opposed to natural causes, to the arts and devices of men, and to accidental chances—as if Moses had said that the hand of God would appear in "the very grievous murrain," that Pharaoh may perceive the Deity to be wroth with him. Moreover, though this might seem a lighter plague than those preceding it, yet it was doubtless more grievous and afflictive to the Egyptians, because it involved much greater injury at a future period. The hand of God had before been adverse to them for a short time, and the evil had been removed together with the infliction; but now the destruction of the cattle will affect them for many years. For this kind of gradation in the judgments of God must be observed, as the Law also denounces against transgressors punishments sevenfold greater, if they do not speedily return into the way.[1] As to his saying that "all the cattle died," it is a *comprehensive*[2] expression, for immediately it will appear that a considerable number of animals still remained. But he means that the herds were everywhere destroyed, and the flocks smitten by the murrain; or, if you prefer it, that the murrain was general in its attack, and that it reduced Egypt to a state of poverty by the destruction of their cattle and other animals. Finally, the universal term merely refers

[1] See Lev. xxvi. 18, 21, 24, 28.

[2] *Lat.*, "synecdochica locutio." *Fr.*, "s'entend que par çi par là il y eut grande desconfiture;" it means that on every side there was great destruction.

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to this plague having been a remarkable proof of God's anger, because the pestilence did not only kill a few animals, as it usually does, but made havoc far and wide of a vast number of herds and flocks.

7. *And Pharaoh sent.* I leave it undecided, whether he then first sent these inspectors;[1] it may be, that, in the blindness of his obstinacy he neglected this, until he was reminded by Moses; for we know how the reprobate shut their eyes against the manifest marks of God's wrath, and wilfully indulge in their errors. Certainly there is no doubt that Pharaoh, whilst he seeks to harden himself in every way, deliberately passed over what it was very useful for him to know; but, since he was informed by Moses of the distinction between the Egyptians and the Israelites, he is compelled, whether he will or no, to ascertain from actual inspection, what he would have gladly been in ignorance of. But this was no obscure demonstration of God's paternal favour towards His chosen people; that the contagion should not have affected that part of Egypt which was fullest of cattle, though it ravaged the whole surrounding neighbourhood. Wherefore, the hardness of the king's wicked heart was all the more base and marvellous, since he was not moved even by this extraordinary circumstance; for it was a token of horrible folly, that, when the matter was examined and discovered by his underlings, he still hardened his heart and would not obey God.

8. And the Lord said unto Moses and unto Aaron, Take to you handfuls of ashes of the furnace, and let Moses sprinkle it toward the heaven in the sight of Pharaoh.

9. And it shall become small dust in all the land of Egypt, and shall be a boil breaking forth *with* blains upon man, and upon beast, throughout all the land of Egypt.

10. And they took ashes of the furnace, and stood before Pharaoh; and Moses sprinkled it up toward heaven; and it became a boil break-

8. Tunc dixit Jehova ad Mosen et ad Aharon, Tollite vobis plenos pugillos vestros favillæ fornacis, et spargat illam Moses per cœlum (*vel*, per aerem) coram Pharaone.

9. Et erit in pulverem super totam terram Ægypti: et erit super hominem, et super jumentum ulcus producens tumores in tota terra Ægypti.

10. Tulerunt ergo favillam fornacis, et steterunt coram Pharaone: et sparsit illam Moses per cœlum, (*vel*, per aerem.) Et fuit ulcus tumo-

[1] "It is asked, why he did not do so before? Resp., Because either, *first*, The roads were impassable on account of the frogs, lice, &c.; or *secondly*, It did not previously occur to him."—*Menochius in Pol. Syn.*

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ing forth *with* blains upon man and upon beast.

11. And the magicians could not stand before Moses because of the boils; for the boil was upon the magicians, and upon all the Egyptians.

12. And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he hearkened not unto them; as the Lord had spoken unto Moses.

rem producens in homine et in jumento.

11. Et non poterant magi stare coram Mose propter ulcus: quia fuit ulcus in magis ut in omnibus Ægyptiis.

12. Et induravit Jehova cor Pharaonis: et non audivit eos: quemadmodum loquutus fuerat Jehova ad Mosen.

8. *And the Lord said unto Moses.* God does not now postpone the time of the punishment, but redoubles the plagues in a continuous series; nor does He threaten Pharaoh, but, leaving him, executes the judgment which He decreed; both because it was now more than sufficiently manifested that admonitions were of no avail with him, and also that his desperate wickedness might be reproved in every way. For although I have lately said that all which happened is not fully related, still the narrative of Moses rather leads us to infer, that nothing about the boils was previously told to Pharaoh, but that the ashes[1] were sprinkled, when he had no suspicion of anything of the kind. But it did not happen naturally that the heaven was darkened by the dust, and that the disease arose from thence; for how could a few ashes cover the whole air? But by this visible sign the tyrant was taught that the calamity which ensued was inflicted by Moses and Aaron. Moreover, God invested His servants with high and

[1] *Havernick*, in his Introduction to the Pentateuch, has a remarkable note on this plague. "The symbolical procedure," he says, "employed by Moses, Ex. ix. 8, &c., is striking, and has never yet been satisfactorily explained. It is, however, made completely intelligible to us by a statement of Manetho in Plutarch, De. Is. et Osir. p. 380: *καὶ γὰρ ἐν Ἑλιοπόλει τῶν ἀνθρώπους κατικτίμπρασαν, ὡς Μανέθων ἱστόρηκε, Τυφωνίους καλοῦντες, καὶ τὴν τέφραν αὐτῶν λικμῶντες ἠφάνιζον, καὶ διέσπειρον.* In respect to this we may leave it undecided how far this statement should be connected with the residence of the Hyksos, a conclusion which there is much to favour; here we have only to do with the striking *rite* mentioned in the notice, which was certainly an ancient mode of expiation, indicating purification, which in antiquity was often symbolized by ashes. (*V. Spencer, De legg. rituall.*, s. iii. diss. 3, c. 1.) We shall thus understand the entire significance, which the procedure had for the Egyptians, inasmuch as a rite which they regarded as sacred in the sense referred to, was here followed by the contrary effect, pollution, as is so expressively indicated by our text."—*Thomson's Translation*, p. 246. *Edinburgh*, 1850.

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extraordinary power, when He gave them command over the air, so that they should envelop it in darkness, and poison it with contagion. Hence we gather, that the devils are called the princes of the air, not because they govern it according to their will, but only so far as the permission[1] to wander in it is accorded to them.

11. *And the magicians could not.* Since the magicians were now also at hand, doubtless they were possessed by their former folly, so that they stood in readiness, as it were, in case an opportunity of contention should be offered them. And, in fact, since Satan, although ten times conquered, is still perpetually hurried forward with indefatigable obstinacy, so neither do his ministers desist from their madness, notwithstanding they have experienced how unsuccessful are their battles. These enchanters had lately confessed that their art availed no farther, and yet they embolden themselves to try all extremities, until the disease of the boils drives them back in disgrace. Wherefore, that we may not betray our madness by similar audacity, let us learn to give God His full glory by voluntary submission. But that Pharaoh, when not only deprived of their assistance, but even when abandoned, and without their presence, is neither changed nor softened, proves that he was not so much deceived by the impostures of others, as stupified by his own malice and perversity; although Moses here repeats that "his heart was hardened by God;" because He desired, as if by an opposing barrier, to have an opportunity for manifesting His power. And here their ignorance is refuted, who imagine that God is endued with mere prescience; for when "as the Lord has spoken" is added, He attributes both in conjunction to Himself, viz., the effect as well as the foreknowledge. On this point we shall enlarge a little further on; yet let us remark that at the same time the tyrant was not absolved from crime, for that his hardness of heart was voluntary. The blains, which were epidemic on the cattle, are a proof that they did not all die in the former catastrophe.

[1] D'y faire leurs efforts.—*Fr.*

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13. And the Lord said unto Moses, Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord God of the Hebrews, Let my people go, that they may serve me.

14. For I will at this time send all my plagues upon thine heart, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people; that thou mayest know that *there is* none like me in all the earth.

15. For now I will stretch out my hand, that I may smite thee and thy people with pestilence; and thou shalt be cut off from the earth.

16. And in very deed for this *cause* have I raised thee up, for to shew *in* thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth.

17. As yet exaltest thou thyself against my people, that thou wilt not let them go?

18. Behold, to-morrow about this time, I will cause it to rain a very grievous hail, such as hath not been in Egypt since the foundation thereof even until now.

19. Send therefore now, *and* gather thy cattle, and all that thou hast in the field: *for upon* every man and beast which shall be found in the field, and shall not be brought home, the hail shall come down upon them, and they shall die.

20. He that feared the word of the Lord among the servants of Pharaoh made his servants and his cattle flee into the houses:

21. And he that regarded not the word of the Lord left his servants and his cattle in the field.

22. And the Lord said unto Moses, Stretch forth thine hand toward heaven, that there may be hail in all the land of Egypt, upon man, and upon beast, and upon every herb of the field, throughout the land of Egypt.

23. And Moses stretched forth his rod toward heaven; and the Lord sent thunder and hail, and the fire ran along upon the ground: and the Lord rained hail upon the land of Egypt.

13. Et ait Jehova ad Mosen, Surge mane et te siste in conspectu Pharaonis, et dic ei, Sic dicit Jehova Deus Hebræorum, Dimitte populum meum ut serviant mihi.

14. Quoniam hac vice ego mittam omnes plagas meas in cor tuum, et in servos tuos, et in populum tuum: ut scias quod nemo sit similis mei in tota terra.

15. Nunc enim extendi manum meam, ut percutiam te et populum tuum peste: et excideris e terra.

16. Et certe ideo constitui te ut ostenderem tibi potentiam meam, et ut enarrent nomen meum in universa terra.

17. Tu adhuc te extollis in populum meum, ut non dimittas eos?

18. Ecce, ego pluam hoc tempore cras grandinem gravissimam, cui non fuit similis in Ægypto ab eo die quo fundata fuit hucusque.

19. Nunc igitur mitte, collige pecus tuum, et quicquid tibi est in agro. Omnes homines et jumentum qui inventi fuerint in agro, et non collecti fuerint intra domum, descendet super eos grando, et morientur.

20. Qui timuit ad sermonem Jehovæ ex servis Pharaonis, confugere jussit servos suos et pecora sua domum.

21. Qui vero non adjecit cor suum ad verbum Jehovæ, reliquit servos suos et pecora sua in agro.

22. Tunc dixit Jehova ad Mosen, Extende manum tuam versus cœlum, et erit grando in tota terra Ægypti, super homines et super jumenta, et super cunctam herbam agri in terra Ægypti.

23. Extendit ergo Moses virgam suam versus cœlum, et dedit Jehova tonitrua et grandinem: discurritque ignis per terram, et pluit Jehova grandinem super terram Ægypti.

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24. So there was hail, and fire mingled with the hail, very grievous, such as there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation.

25. And the hail smote throughout all the land of Egypt all that *was* in the field, both man and beast; and the hail smote every herb of the field, and brake every tree of the field.

26. Only in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel *were*, was there no hail.

24. Et fuit grando atque ignis grandine implicitus gravis valde: cui similis nulla fuit in tota terra Ægypti, ex quo fuit in gentem.

25. Et percussit grando in tota terra Ægypti quicquid fuit in agro, ab homine usque ad jumentum. Et percussit grando cunctam herbam agri, atque omnes arbores agri confregit.

26. Tantum in terra Gosen, ubi erant filii Israel, non fuit grando.

13. *And the Lord said unto Moses, Rise up.* God returns again to threats, to try the mind of the wicked king; not that there is any hope of a cure, but that his obstinacy may be more and more discovered. For it was desirable as an example, that it should be known openly how madly those, who are cast into a reprobate state of feeling, and who are possessed by a spirit of wilfulness, rush upon their own destruction. Surely it would be incredible, that any human being should have ever resisted God with such headstrong folly and obstinacy, unless this picture had been presented to us. How often was Pharaoh commanded to send the people away, and on every occasion a ratification of the command[1] was added! So that God no less thundered from heaven than He spoke on earth by the mouth of His servant and ambassador; yet still the mind of the tyrant was not subdued into obedience, because Satan alienates the minds of those, whom by God's permission he holds in devotion, and bondage, to himself. Meanwhile, they heap up more terrible vengeance against themselves by their impious contempt of warnings.

14. *For I will at this time.* The unexpressed condition is implied, "unless he should submit himself to God." The meaning is, that although he had already chastised his pride, yet that this had been done gently and in moderation; but that He now would use a heavier scourge, since the lighter rods had been unavailing. Thus his ingratitude is reproved, because he had not acknowledged that he had been spared,

[1] The French Version supplies "avec menaces;" with threatenings.

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in order that, having suffered only some trifling losses,[1] he might return to his right mind. Wherefore, because God had proceeded gradually with his punishments, He now threatens that He will inflict many on him at once; as He is wont to act with the rebellious. On which account also David exhorts us not to be "as the horse and mule—whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle when they are restive," (Ps. xxxii. 9;) whence he concludes, that "many sorrows shall be to the wicked" and rebellious. But Moses here denounces plagues, which shall not only affect the head and arms, but which shall reach to the heart itself, and inflict a deadly wound in his very bowels; for Pharaoh was so obstinate that it was not enough to batter his sides. In fine, he is enjoined to make haste and provide against the awful judgment which impended, unless he chose rather to perish with all his (servants.) The expression, "all my plagues," embraces whatever chastisement we shall hereafter see inflicted on him; and therefore the word, דבר, *deber*, designates every kind of death; as much as to say, that He would heap punishment upon punishment, until He had destroyed the tyrant together with his whole nation. What is afterwards added, "that thou mayest know that there is none like me in all the earth," implies that Pharaoh had hitherto struggled against Him, because he had never really and seriously apprehended the extent of the divine power; for wherever it is really felt, it is impossible but that pride must be humbled before it. And, doubtless, the reprobate, although in some measure they recognise the power of God, still rush on with a kind of frenzied impulse, and their wickedness is combined with blindness of heart, so that seeing, they do not see. Meantime we are reminded, that the reprobate only gain this by their stupidity, that God should proceed against them with all His forces, and drag and compel them against their will to understand His power, from which they fly. But that he may expect no longer truce, God affirms in the next verse that He is advancing with an outstretched hand. For God is not here commending His patience in the slowness of His procedure, as some prefer to

[1] Dommages temporels.—*Fr.*

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explain it; but He rather admonishes him that the execution was nigh at hand, since He had armed Himself, and prepared His forces before He had spoken a word.

16. *And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up.* The word, העמדתי, *hagnemadthi*, is variously explained; it properly signifies "to appoint;" some, therefore, refer it to his eminent position, as if God had placed Pharaoh on the throne, for the purpose of better manifesting His glory.[1] The Greek interpreter extends the meaning, translating it ἐξήγειρά σε, "I have stirred thee up," as much as to say, that Pharaoh had been chosen by the secret counsel and providence of God that His power might be exercised upon him; as He is constantly said to stir up those whom He brings forward, to apply them to those objects for which He has destined them. Others think that this sentence depends on what has gone before, and interpret it "I have preserved thee," or "chosen that thou shouldest survive." For the Hebrew verb, which is transitive in *Hiphil*, is derived from עמד, *gnamod*, which means "to stand up." Since, therefore, God had restrained Himself, He now assigns the cause of His moderation, because if Pharaoh had fallen in one trifling engagement, the glory of His victory would have been less illustrious. In fine, lest Pharaoh should flatter himself, or harden himself by vain confidence, God affirms that He does not want strength to destroy him immediately, but that He had delayed his ultimate punishment for another purpose, viz., that Pharaoh might slowly learn that he strove in vain against His incomparable power; and that thus this remarkable history should be celebrated in all ages. But although Paul follows the Greek interpreter, there is no reason why we should not embrace this latter sense; for we know that the Apostles were not so particular in quoting the words, but that they rather considered the substance. But,

[1] העמדתיך. By the Greek interpreter we should generally understand the LXX. to be meant, but it has διετηρήθης, which is obviously a less close rendering than ἐξήγειρά σε, the version adopted by Paul. As the root עמד, means *to stand up*, it is perfectly regular that the Hiphil, or causal preterite, *I have made thee to stand up*, should be held equivalent to *I have raised thee up*, as in our A.V. *S.M., I have preserved thee.— W.*

Calvin's Latin is "excitavi te." See Rev. J. Owen's note on Calvin's Commentary on the Romans, ix. 17. *Cal. Soc. Transl.*, p. 360.

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although we admit that by God's long-suffering Pharaoh continued to hold out, until he became a clear and notorious proof of the madness and folly of all those who resist God, yet this also has reference to the eternal prescience of God; for therefore did God spare Pharaoh to stand for a time, because, before he was born, he had been predestinated for this purpose. Wherefore, also, Paul rightly concludes, that "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth." (Rom. ix. 16.) For whether God raises up or upholds the reprobate, He wonderfully manifests His glory by their perverseness. Thus is their ignorance refuted, who, by this cavil, endeavour to overturn the eternal predestination of God; because it is not said, that He created Pharaoh with this intention, but that He suspended His judgment for a time. For this intermediate and progressive course of proceeding arose from this source, that Pharaoh was the organ or instrument of God's wrath.

17. *As yet exaltest thou thyself.* The expression which Moses uses[1] denotes the pride of Pharaoh; because he too insolently exalted himself by trampling on the people. God therefore inquires, as if in astonishment, what this blinded fury meant, that the tyrant should hope that the injuries whereby he undeservedly afflicted God's people, would be permitted with impunity? For he was already taught, by many miracles, that God had, as their protector, undertaken the cause of His people, so that He would be the avenger of all their unjust treatment. At the same time He ironically reproves the tyrant's folly, in that he was not humbled by so many chastisements; as if He had said, that although, when intoxicated by prosperity, he might have raged against the wretched people with tyrannical and persevering arbitrariness, yet, after undergoing so many plagues, it was surely time to cease.

18. *Behold, to-morrow about this time.* God now indicates the kind of punishment which He was prepared to inflict, viz., that He would smite with hail both man and beast, and a

[1] מסתולל. Part. Hithp. Raising up thyself like a rampart. *C.* found in *S. M.* that Kimchi had followed Aben-Ezra in interpreting the root סלל, to trample, a meaning not acknowledged by recent Lexicographers. —*W.*

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part of the crops. It sometimes, indeed, happens that the corn is destroyed by hail, and occasionally that great injury is thus inflicted even on men and beasts; nay, it is regarded as an unusual blessing if ten or fifteen years pass by without such a calamity. But God makes it apparent by certain signs in the judgment, which he has determined to execute, that the hail did not arise from natural causes, but that the atmosphere was manifestly armed by Him for the battle. First, the morrow is fixed; nor is this enough, the hour also is added. But what astronomer or philosopher could thus measure the moments for storms and tempests? Then, again, its unusual violence, such as had never been seen before, is appointed. Fourthly, its extent, from the extreme boundaries of Egypt, from the one side to the other, as well as its expansion over its whole breadth. Scarcely once in twenty years will a storm so widely prevail, flying, as this did, like an arrow; but, restrained within narrow limits, it will not thus diffuse itself far and wide. Lastly, the distinction is added between Goshen and the rest of Egypt. Hence it is plain, that this hail was not produced by an accidental impulse, but made to fall by God's hand; in a word, that it was not the drops of moisture frozen in mid air, but a portent which transcended the bounds of nature.

19. *Send therefore now.* He does not give this counsel as if He would spare His professed enemy, but He insults his mad confidence, because hitherto in his supine security he had despised whatever punishments had been denounced against him. He indirectly hints, therefore, that now is the time for fear. Secondly, that when God contends, the event is not a doubtful one; because He not only openly challenges him to the combat, but assures him that He shall have no difficulty in putting him to the rout. Finally, He shews him, that He has no need of deceit, or of any stratagems to overtake His enemy, but that, although He grants him a way of escape, still He should be victorious.

20. *He that feared the word of the Lord.* In these words Moses shews that there were some who were so far taught by experience as not altogether to despise what he had denounced; for hence arose their fear from the denunciation

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of the punishment, because they were persuaded that Moses was the servant of God, and a Prophet, as well as the herald of the Divine judgment. Although it likewise appears that they had not seriously repented so as to obey God, but were impelled to take these precautions by immediate and momentary terror. Thus, particular fear often makes the reprobate anxious either to deprecate or fly from the vengeance of God. Still Moses says, that their fear profited them, for they did not experience the same calamity as others, who were more insensible. In this way God bore witness, that in proportion as each one more obstinately despises His judgments, the more grievously and heavily is he afflicted; but that some unbelievers are in some degree spared from inconveniences, and more gently chastised, because they at least do not proudly exalt themselves to despise His power. Moreover, by this destruction the judgment of God more clearly shone forth, when among the Egyptians themselves, whosoever was most hardened received the sure reward of his contempt. Yet are we taught by this example, that it does not greatly profit unbelievers, though God may pardon them for a while when they are alarmed and humbled; because they ever remain under condemnation to eternal death.

22. *And the Lord said.* The rod of Moses is again employed to bring on the storm, not so much for Pharaoh's sake, as that Moses may be the more encouraged to the remaining contests, when he sees the proof of his vocation renewed. In the meanwhile, we may observe the trial of his faith, since before he had received the command to stretch forth his rod toward heaven, he had not hesitated to predict to Pharaoh the grievous and miraculous hail. But if any one thinks that this is an ὕστερον πρότερον, and that what was first in order of time is related last, I will not debate it; but this seems more probable to me, and also to be rightly gathered from the text, that when the day had elapsed, Moses was commanded to execute that of which the means was before unknown to him. Hence, also, both Moses himself learnt, and we also ought now to learn, that all the elements, although without sense, are still ready to render any kind of

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obedience to their Maker; since, at the stretching forth of the rod the air was troubled in an incredible manner, so that it hurled down an abundance of hail for the destruction of beasts and men.

27. And Pharaoh sent, and called for Moses and Aaron, and said unto them, I have sinned this time: the Lord *is* righteous, and I and my people *are* wicked.

28. Entreat the Lord (for *it is* enough) that there be no *more* mighty thunderings and hail; and I will let you go, and ye shall stay no longer.

29. And Moses said unto him, As soon as I am gone out of the city, I will spread abroad my hands unto the Lord; *and* the thunder shall cease, neither shall there be any more hail; that thou mayest know how that the earth *is* the Lord's.

30. But as for thee and thy servants, I know that ye will not yet fear the Lord God.

31. And the flax and the barley was smitten: for the barley *was* in the ear, and the flax *was* bolled.

32. But the wheat and the rye were not smitten; for they *were* not grown up.

33. And Moses went out of the city from Pharaoh, and spread abroad his hands unto the Lord; and the thunders and hail ceased, and the rain was not poured upon the earth.

34. And when Pharaoh saw that the rain, and the hail, and the thunders, were ceased, he sinned yet more, and hardened his heart, he and his servants.

35. And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, neither would he let the children of Israel go; as the Lord had spoken by Moses.

27. Tunc misit Pharao ad vocandum Mosen et Aharon: et dixit ad eos, Peccavi hac vice, Jehova justus est: ego autem et populus meus scelerati.

28. Precamini Jehovam, et magnum *erit* si non sint tonitrua (*vel*, multum est quod sint tonitrua) Dei et grando: et dimittam vos, nec ultra manebitis.

29. Tunc dixit Moses, Ubi egressus fuero ex urbe, extendam manus meas ad Jehovam: cessabunt tonitrua, et grando non erit amplius, ut scias quod Jehovæ sit terra.

30. Atqui de te et servis tuis cognosco quod nondum timeatis coram facie Jehovæ Dei.

31. Linum et hordeum percussa sunt: nam hordeum maturescebat, et linum erat in calamo.

32. Triticum vero et zea non sunt percussa, eo quod abscondita essent.

33. Et egressus Moses a congressu Pharaonis extra urbem, expandit manus suas ad Jehovam: et cessarunt tonitrua et grando, et pluvia non est effusa super terram.

34. Videns autem Pharao quod cessasset pluvia, et grando, et tonitrua, adjecit adhuc ad impie agendum, et aggravavit cor suum ipse et servi ejus.

35. Et obduruit cor Pharaonis, nec dimisit filios Israel, sicut loquutus fuerat Jehova per manum Mosis.

27. *And Pharaoh sent and called.* If this confession had proceeded from the heart, it would have betokened repentance; but Moses immediately perceived that fear in the heart of the wicked is not a principle which governs them in lasting duty;[1] and this was more manifest in the result.

[1] "Et n'est maitresse que pour une minute;" and is only their mistress for a minute.—*Fr.*

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Although we must, at the same time, recollect, what I have already touched upon, that Pharaoh did not lie designedly; for when seized by terror, he caught at every means to appease God, but soon after relapsed into his former state of mind. For although with fox-like cunning the wicked pretend submission, when they see themselves caught, in order to escape from the snare, still they do not mean to mock God by their soft words; but rather under the pressure of necessity they are ready to do anything, and therefore offer propitiations and satisfactions; but when their fear has departed, because whatever they promised was forcibly extorted from them, they directly break out afresh. A very similar circumstance is related of Saul. He confesses to his own disgrace the innocence of David, and yet, as soon as he has escaped from the danger, and is freed from fear, he does not cease to persecute him cruelly. (1 Sam. xxiv. 18, and xxvi. 21.) But if we admit that this was mere dissimulation, Pharaoh had greater cause for fear, because, being experimentally convinced that God was his adversary, he was impelled by his fear to make any conditions whatever. But, first of all, he acknowledges that he had "sinned this time," not to excuse the former cases, but because, in such gross contempt, the crime of obstinacy was still more detestable. And this more fully appears in the following words, wherein he acknowledges the justice of God, and confesses the wickedness of himself and his people. It is just as if he had said, that he is deservedly punished, because he had too long provoked God, who is a just judge. Now since, as far as his words go, Pharaoh professes true repentance, we may gather from them, that, sinners do not attribute to God the honour due to His justice, unless they condemn themselves; and this must be more carefully observed, because there are few who think that, while they are endeavouring to rebut the accusations of guiltiness, they are dishonouring God. Yet, whosoever does not judge himself, and who does not frankly confess his sins, is assuredly murmuring against the judgment of God. Pharaoh, at length, has recourse to deprecation, in which he desires to have Moses and Aaron as his intercessors; not, I admit, without deception, (because

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hypocrites are always double-hearted;) yet it is certain, that because he was terrified by his troubles, he sought for peace with God, lest his rebellion should draw down upon him new and greater punishments; but as soon as, having obtained his desire, he ceased to be afraid, the secret wickedness which lay, as it were, stifled under the abundance of his miseries, burst forth out of the sense of security. What immediately follows is variously explained by the translators; some understand it negatively, "that there be not," or "if there be not—thunderings;" and even these disagree among themselves; for some suppose that Pharaoh congratulates himself, because the thunders have ceased; but it is plain from the context that they are grossly mistaken. If, then, a negation is intended, the passage must necessarily refer to the future; as if Pharaoh had said, that he should be very graciously dealt with, if God should please to allay the thunderings.[1] But the various reading is equally probable; "It is much, or a great thing, that there are, or have been thunderings;" as though he said, that he had been punished enough, or more than enough for his folly; or (as best pleases myself) that he is now subdued by terror, whilst he is alarmed by the continual rollings of the thunder and the beating of the hail; for he seems to desire to prove the truth of his conversion, because he is conquered by the terrible power of God.

29. *And Moses said.* In this answer Moses indirectly hints, that he leaves the presence of Pharaoh, in order duly and purely to supplicate God; since by his unbelief he would in a manner pollute the sacrifices. For, as he had already shewn, that legitimate worship could not be offered by the people except away from Egypt, so now he seeks to be alone for prayer; and thus, by this change of place, he indicates that the place, in which Pharaoh dwells, is unholy. We have already said, that Moses promises nothing out of mere rash

[1] ורב, literally, *and much. A. V.*, It is enough. The LXX. and *V.* translators seem not to have found this expression in their copies of the Hebrew text. The Syriac amplifies it into *And there is abundant room before him. S. M., Multum enim est* ut fuerint tonitrua, &c.; and he adds, Onkelos sic vertit, Magnum coram me est tuorum, quod non sint super nos voces illæ execrandæ.—*W.*

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impulse, but that, taught either by the inspiration of the Spirit, or by sure revelation, he pronounces, with the authority of a prophet, what God is about to do. Moreover, it is not without reason that Moses exhorts Pharaoh to learn from the remission of the punishment, that the God of Israel is the Lord of Egypt also; for the word *earth* seems here to be limited to Egypt; although I do not deny that it may be properly understood of the whole world; but, whichever you may prefer, Moses rightly concludes, that the glory and dominion of God is perfectly manifested, not only when he appears as an avenger in the infliction of punishment, but that He also shews it in an opposite way, when all the elements are subservient to His mercy. Besides, His power is still more clearly shewn forth, when He himself heals the wounds which He has inflicted; and, therefore, in Isaiah xli. 23, and xlv. 7, in order to prove His divinity, He joins the two together, viz., that it is His prerogative and attribute both to "do good, or to do evil."

30. *But as for thee and thy servants, I know.* Such freedom of reproof plainly proves with what magnanimity the holy Prophet was endued, who, without taking any account of the wrath of the imperious and cruel tyrant, does not hesitate to condemn the impiety of himself and his whole court. Nor can it indeed be questioned, that God miraculously restrained so many wild beasts to keep their hands off Moses; for it cannot be attributed either to their moderation or humanity, that men, otherwise worse than bloody-minded, did not kill him a hundred times over, when he so bitterly provoked them. But, from his firmness, it also appears how much he had profited by his novitiate;[1] because he, who had before fled far for refuge in fear of their darts, now has no alarm in the hottest conflict. But he justly affirms that the Egyptians do not "fear the Lord;" because alarm and terror do not always lead the mind to reverence and due obedience. For Moses speaks of true fear, which altogether attaches us to God, wherefore it is called "wisdom," and "the beginning of wisdom." (Prov. i. 7, and Ps. cxi. 10.) But hypocrites, although they fear the name of God, are very far from will-

[1] Tyrocinio.—*Lat.* Apprentissage.—*Fr.*

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ingly desiring to serve Him. Wherefore, lest we be deceived by empty imaginations, let us learn honestly to sift all our feelings, and diligently to examine into all those winding[1] recesses, wherewith human hearts are filled and incredibly entangled. A question arises, why Moses undertook the part of an intercessor, when he sees no repentance? my reply is, that he was not thus ready to spare, as if he had been persuaded; but that he gave a short intermission, until the king's impiety should again betray itself, and thus God should fulfil what he had predicted respecting all the plagues. It is, then, absurd to gather, as some do, from this passage, that ministers of the word and pastors should be satisfied with a mere verbal confession; for Moses did not so much intend to pardon as to open a way for the remaining judgments of God.

31. *And the flax and the barley.* He relates the calamity which the hail inflicted; and shews that a part of the fruits of the earth was destroyed, viz., that which had already grown into stalk; but that the seeds which grow more slowly were spared. For God desired to give a remnant of hope, which might invite the king and his people to repentance, if only their wickedness were curable.

34. *And when Pharaoh saw.* Again, as usual, Pharaoh gathers audacity from the mitigation of his punishment, as security arms the reprobate against God; for as soon as the scourges of God rest for awhile, they cherish the presumption that they will be unpunished, and construe the short truce into an abiding peace. Pharaoh, then, hardens anew his heart, which he seemed to have somewhat changed, as soon as he is delivered from this infliction; as though he had not been warned that others remained behind, nay, that the hand of God was already stretched out against him. Therefore, at the end of the chapter, Moses amplifies the crime when he adds, that this had been foretold[2] "by the hand of Moses." We have sometimes seen already that the wicked king was hardened, as God had said to Moses; now, more is expressed, viz., that Moses had been the proclaimer of his indomitable and desperate obstinacy.

[1] Arrieres boutiques.—*Fr.* [2] Ver. 35, *A. V.*, marg. ref.

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CHAPTER TENTH.

1. And the Lord said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh: for I have hardened his heart, and the heart of his servants, that I might shew these my signs before him:

2. And that thou mayest tell in the ears of thy son, and of thy son's son, what things I have wrought in Egypt, and my signs which I have done among them; that ye may know how that I *am* the Lord.

3. And Moses and Aaron came in unto Pharaoh, and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord God of the Hebrews, How long wilt thou refuse to humble thyself before me? let my people go, that they may serve me:

4. Else, if thou refuse to let my people go, behold, to-morrow will I bring the locusts into thy coast:

5. And they shall cover the face of the earth, that one cannot be able to see the earth: and they shall eat the residue of that which is escaped, which remaineth unto you from the hail, and shall eat every tree which groweth for you out of the field.

6. And they shall fill thy houses, and the houses of all thy servants, and the houses of all the Egyptians; which neither thy fathers, nor thy fathers' fathers have seen, since the day that they were upon the earth unto this day. And he turned himself, and went out from Pharaoh.

1. Et dixit Jehovah ad Mosen, Vade ad Pharaonem: quia ego aggravavi cor ejus, et cor servorum ejus, ut ponerem signa mea hæc in medio ejus.

2. Et ut narres in auribus filii tui et nepotis tui quæ fecerim in Ægypto, et signa mea quæ posuero inter eos: et sciatis quod ego sum Jehova.

3. Venit ergo Moses et Aharon ad Pharaonem, et dixerunt ei, Sic dicit Jehova Deus Hebræorum, Quousque renuis humiliari coram facie mea? Dimitte populum meum ut serviant mihi.

4. Quod si tu renuis dimittere populum meum, ecce, ego inducam cras locustam in terminos tuos.

5. Et operiet superficiem terræ, ut non possit videri terra: et comedet quod residuum est, quod evasit, quod relictum est vobis a grandine: et comedet omnem arborem quæ fructificat vobis ex agro.

6. Et implebunt domos tuas, et domos omnium servorum tuorum, et domos omnium Ægyptiorum: quas non viderunt patres tui, et patres patrum tuorum, a die quo ipsi fuerunt super terram usque ad diem hunc. Et aversus, egressus est a Pharaone.

1. *And the Lord said.* Moses passes on to another plague, whereby God took vengeance on the treachery and obstinacy of the wicked king; viz., that He gave over the remaining produce of the year, which He had spared, to be eaten and devoured by locusts. And this was no ordinary punishment, to destroy Egypt by dearth and famine, when all their corn had perished. But, before Moses proceeds to this, he again relates that he was the proclaimer of this plague, and that God had announced to him the reason why Pharaoh had so often resisted to his own injury. Therefore God says, that

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He had hardened his heart, in order that he might shew forth these miracles and evidences of His power; for if Pharaoh had been humbled, and had yielded immediately, the contest would have been superfluous; since what would be the object of contending with a conquered and prostrate enemy? The obstinacy of the tyrant, then, in so often provoking God, opened the way to more miracles, as fire is produced by the collision of flint and iron. Thence also the silly imagination is refuted, that the heart of Pharaoh was no otherwise hardened than as the miracles were set before his eyes; for Moses does not say that his heart was divinely hardened by the sight of the signs, but that it pleased God in this manner to manifest His power. Hence also we gather, that whatever occurred was predestinated by the sure counsel of God. For God willed to redeem His people in a singular and unusual way. That this redemption might be more conspicuous and glorious, He set up Pharaoh against Himself like a rock of stone, which by its hardness might afford a cause for new and more remarkable miracles. Pharaoh was, therefore, hardened by the marvellous providence of God with this object, that the grace of His deliverance might be neither despicable nor obscure. For God regarded His own people more than the Egyptians, as immediately appears, "that thou mayest tell in the ears of thy son, and of thy son's son," &c. For far more abundant material for thanksgiving and for celebrating the memory of their deliverance was afforded, by the fact of the Israelites having seen God's arm stretched forth so often from heaven, and with so many prodigies. Had they been redeemed by any ordinary method, the praise due to God would soon have been forgotten. It was proper, then, that their posterity should be thus instructed by their fathers, that they might have no doubts as to the author of so illustrious a work. But it is here required of the fathers, who had been eye-witnesses of the signs, that they should be diligent and assiduous in teaching their children; and on these also, care and attention in learning is enjoined, that the recollection of God's mercies should flourish throughout all ages. The practical effect of this doctrine is seen in Psalms xliv. and cv.

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3. *And Moses and Aaron came in.* Moses now relates how, at God's command, he tried whether Pharaoh's heart, after so many experiments, would be bent to obedience out of fear of the new punishment which impended. But by this proof his impiety was better known, since, although he saw his kingdom deprived of a part of its corn, he fears not what is denounced by Moses respecting the other part. Therefore he reproves him still more severely, inquiring, "How long" wilt thou proudly resist the command of God? For since plagues vanquish even the worst natures, it was marvellous that the king, having been smitten eight times, and in so awful a manner, was still unwilling to yield, as if he were in safety, and unaffected by any injury. But we may learn from this passage, that we are chastised with this object by the rods of God, that we may return from the indulgence of our lusts to submission to Him. This Moses calls (and Peter after him, 1 Pet. v. 6) to "humble" ourselves before God, or "beneath His mighty hand," when, having experienced His formidable power, we reverently submit ourselves to His dominion. Whence it follows, that they, who are neither tamed nor bent by the fear of punishment, struggle against God as with an iron[1] brow. Let fear, then, teach us to repent; and that we may not provoke His vengeance by proud contempt, let us learn that nothing is more terrible than to fall into His hands. Moses also hints that Pharaoh's contention was not with the Israelites only, but with God who undertook their cause. And let us not doubt, therefore, that all tyrants, who unjustly persecute the Church, contend with God Himself, to whose powers they will find themselves far inferior.

4. *Else, if thou refuse.* Moses denounces the extreme dearth and famine of the land of Egypt, because the locusts will suddenly arise, altogether to consume the remaining produce of the year; for half of it had already been destroyed by the hail. But, although ancient histories bear witness, and it has happened also in our time, that not only cornfields, but that pastures have been devoured by locusts, still we may gather from the circumstances, that this was an ex-

[1] D'airain; brazen.—*Fr.*

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traordinary instance of the divine vengeance; because Moses both appoints the next day, and also relates that an incredible multitude suddenly burst forth, and adds, that such had never been seen; and, lastly, threatens that no house should be exempt from their invasion. Moreover, it is worth while again to remark the nature of the scourge, that God collects and arms a host of vile insects, whereby He may insultingly overcome this indomitable tyrant with all his forces. The ingratitude of Egypt, too, was worthy of this return, since it was too great an indignity that the posterity of Joseph should be tyrannically persecuted in that country, which a little more than 250 years before he had preserved from famine by his energy. What follows in verse 6, that "he turned himself, and went out from Pharaoh," is recorded as a token of his indignation; as though Moses, worn out with the perverseness of the tyrant, had hastily withdrawn himself from him, without bidding him farewell. Therefore, although he was otherwise of a mild disposition, this peremptory harshness was to be adopted as a reproof of the arrogance with which the tyrant spit in the face of heaven itself. But, let the Pharaohs of our age also learn, that when they impede by their cruel menaces the pure worship of God, it is in His strict justice that fanatics, like locusts, assail their kingdoms with their impious errors, and infect their people with contagion.

7. And Pharaoh's servants said unto him, How long shall this man be a snare unto us? let the men go, that they may serve the Lord their God: knowest thou not yet that Egypt is destroyed?

8. And Moses and Aaron were brought again unto Pharaoh: and he said unto them, Go, serve the Lord your God: *but* who *are* they that shall go?

9. And Moses said, We will go with our young and with our old, with our sons and with our daughters, with our flocks and with our herds will we go: for we *must hold* a feast unto the Lord.

10. And he said unto them, Let the Lord be so with you, as I will

7. Dixerunt autem servi Pharaonis ad eum, Quousque erit hic vobis in offendiculum? Dimitte homines, ut serviant Jehovæ Deo suo. An ante scies quod perierit Ægyptus? (*vel*, Antequam scies periisse Ægyptum.)

8. Et reductus est Moses atque Aharon ad Pharaonem: dixitque ad eos, Ite et servite Jehovæ Deo vestro. Qui sunt qui abibunt?

9. Et ait Moses, Cum pueris nostris, et cum senioribus nostris ibimus, cum filiis nostris et filiabus nostris, cum ovibus nostris, et cum armentis nostris ibimus: quia festus dies Jehovæ nobis est.

10. Tunc dixit illis, Ita sit Jehova vobiscum, ut vos dimittam, et par-

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let you go, and your little ones: look *to it;* for evil *is* before you.

11. Not so: go now ye *that are* men, and serve the Lord; for that ye did desire. And they were driven out from Pharaoh's presence.

vulos vestros. Videte, quia malum est coram vobis.

11. Non sic, Ite nunc viri, et servite Jehovæ: quia vos hoc postulastis. Et ejecit eos a facie Pharaonis.

7. *And Pharaoh's servants said unto him.* We have seen, a little above, that they were obstinate in common with their king; nor can it be doubted that by their servile flattery they had blinded him more and more; but now, conquered by their calamities, and fearing something still worse, they seek to mitigate his fury,—not because they had themselves returned to their senses, but because they feel that they are overcome by the hand of God, and that strength to resist had failed them. They say, therefore, that Moses, until he should be dismissed, would be a constant source of evil to them. Whether you translate the word מוקש,[1] *mokesh*, a snare or a stumbling-block, is of little consequence, because it is taken metaphorically for every kind of misfortune or injury. They signify, then, that no end of their troubles was to be expected so long as Pharaoh shall contend with Moses; for that evils would follow upon evils. By the question "how long?" they admonish him that his pertinacity had already been more injurious than enough; and thence they conclude that there is nothing better to be done than, by the expulsion of Moses, to free himself from the snare, or to avoid the stumbling-block, since he could only fight unsuccessfully. As to the second part of the verse, interpreters differ. The Chaldee Paraphrast translates it with the introduction of a negative,—"Knowest thou not yet that Egypt is destroyed?" Word for word it is, "whether to know before," or "before that to know." But because the infinitive is sometimes taken for the future, thus does it seem to accord very well with the sense—"Do you wish to know the destruction of the whole kingdom before you

[1] מוקש. The root of this word makes it obvious that its proper meaning is a *snare*. The word offendiculum mentioned by *C.*, he found in *S. M.;* but the LXX. and *V.* have also rendered it a *stumbling-block*.

As to the latter part of this verse, *C.* appears to have given too hasty a glance at *S. M.'s* notes. Neither the Hebrew nor the Chaldee Paraphrast has used the infinitive. *S. M.* has ceased to speak of Onkelos, when he proceeds to say, Alii sic vertunt, visne prius experiri?—*W.*

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desist from your unhappy contention?" as if they had said, that unless God should avert His anger, the remedy would be soon too late and useless.

8. *And Moses and Aaron were brought again.* It is probable that, when the wrath of the king was appeased, some of the company were hastily despatched to bring back Moses in that same hour, lest the calamity denounced by him should happen on the morrow. For we may gather from the king's words that he was not altogether overcome by their entreaties; but that, because he was unwilling to offend all their minds by an abrupt refusal, he suffered Moses to be recalled, that he might delude them by an underhand artifice; since thus do tyrants escape unpopularity by the false appearance of consent.[1] But he returns to his former purpose, when seeking to compound with God by an intermediate course he wishes to secure to himself the people's return. It appears indeed that he was himself also frightened, and sought some way to propitiate God; meanwhile, as if it were free for him to make conditions, he proposes such as would be advantageous to himself; as hypocrites are wont so to treat with God, as if He were compelled to abandon half His rights. But although he cunningly inquires, as if the point were doubtful,[2] still his suspicion is easily discovered. Therefore, what he knows to be enjoined him respecting all, he restricts to a few, and yet pretends that he accords what is right and what ought to satisfy God. But although Moses, in his answer, abundantly cuts off all pretext for subterfuge, and does not flatter him with any prevarication or ambiguity, still he suppresses God's counsel respecting the deliverance of the people—not because he wishes to deceive or to lie, but that he may confine himself within the bounds of his commission. And lest it might be objected that in this way the Israelites would be withdrawn from their legitimate government, he does not dissemble that, being adopted by God, they were under the dominion of none other. God therefore openly asks again His own whom He has once

[1] "A fausses enseignes;" under false colours.—*Fr.*

[2] Addition in *Fr.*, "quelle partie du peuple deura aller;" what part of the people was to go.

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attached to Himself. Nor must He be thought to have dealt fraudulently with the tyrant, although He conceals His counsel from him. He says that the Israelites must take their flocks and their herds with them, that the victims which they should offer to God may be at hand. As to their "sons and their daughters," he insinuates that the feast-day must be kept by the very least of them, because God had devoted them all to Himself for the services of piety.

10. *Let the Lord be so with you.* I am surprised that this passage, so clear in itself, should be violently wrested by the interpreters.[1] Some thus expound it,—"I would that God may not otherwise favour you, than as I am determined to let you go;" while others think that it was spoken deceitfully, as though he had commended them to God after their departure. I will not adduce the opinions of all, nor is it necessary. I have no doubt that it was an ironical sneer, whereby he insults, at the same time, both God and them; as if he had said, "You boast that God is on your side; experience will prove this, if I shall let you go." Thus, then, establishing himself as the supreme judge as to their departure, and claiming to himself the power of forbidding and preventing them from going, he derides their confidence, because, in demanding their free dismissal, they profess to do so under the auspices and by the command of God; just as if he had said, "If I do not hinder you, then you may reasonably pretend that Jehovah is the guide of your journey." In this way he wantonly provokes God, and denies that He is able so to aid His people as to prevent his own power from prevailing to resist Him. Thus the reprobate, after having been troubled in themselves, sometimes burst forth with ravings of contempt against God, as if they were well secured from all dangers, and counting for nothing the aid which God has promised to give to His own people, fearlessly ridicule the simplicity of their faith.

Again, in the second clause of the verse, many, as it appears to me, raise unnecessary difficulties. Some gather

[1] In commenting on this verse, *C.* alludes to interpretations not noticed by *S. M.—W.* The gloss in the *Geneva Bible* is, "I would the Lord were no more affectioned toward you than I am minded to let you go."

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from it this sense,—"The evil which you are planning shall happen to yourselves, and shall be turned against your own faces." Others think that it is a comparison taken from a target, because the Israelites were looking steadfastly at nothing but ill-doing.[1] But I do not doubt that Pharaoh, after having set his tyrannical prohibitions in array against God, now threatens them, to inspire them with terror. He says, therefore, that evil awaits the Israelites, and is, as it were, held up before their eyes, because they are about to suffer the penalty of their rashness. Thus he signifies that the help of God, in which they confide for protection, is either evanescent or will profit them nothing. But when he says, "Look *to it,*" he indirectly taunts them; because, in their reliance on God's assistance, they are rushing inconsiderately on their ruin. The conclusion is, that they were ill-advised as to their own interests in making these attempts, and that they foolishly or incautiously trusted to the protection of God.

11. *Not so.* He pretends to give them what they had asked at first, and thus accuses them of changeableness, because they do not persevere in the same determination. Whereas it is certain that the cause of his pertinacity in resisting was because he feared that the whole people should depart from Egypt. He knew, then, that what Moses required in God's name extended also to their little ones, else would he have not been enraged at it. But, in order to cast blame upon them, he falsely and calumniously reproaches them with having doubled their unjust demands, whilst he is exercising the greatest kindness, because he accedes to their original request. But he had no wish to rob the parents of their children, but to retain them as hostages; for he was persuaded that they would not willingly renounce pledges which were so dear to them. With respect to what is added at the end of the verse, "He drove them away from Pharaoh's presence,"[2] some take it indefinitely, and understand "some

[1] "Les Israelites ne regardent, et ne tendent qu' a mal faire, come les archiers dressent les yeux a leur but;" they have no other object or intention but do wrong, and (have their eyes as steadfastly set upon it) as archers fix theirs on the butt.—*Fr.*

[2] *Vide* Latin.

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one of his dependents;" but, since it is usual in Hebrew to omit the antecedent, and then to supply it in the place of the relative, I have no doubt that Pharaoh, perceiving Moses not to be contented with half of them, grew angry, and drove him out with renewed menaces, because he could not endure his presence.

12. And the Lord said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the land of Egypt for the locusts, that they may come up upon the land of Egypt, and eat every herb of the land, *even* all that the hail hath left.

13. And Moses stretched forth his rod over the land of Egypt, and the Lord brought an east wind upon the land all that day, and all *that* night; *and* when it was morning, the east wind brought the locusts.

14. And the locusts went up over all the land of Egypt, and rested in all the coasts of Egypt: very grievous *were they;* before them there were no such locusts as they, neither after them shall be such.

15. For they covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened; and they did eat every herb of the land, and all the fruit of the trees which the hail had left: and there remained not any green thing in the trees, or in the herbs of the field, through all the land of Egypt.

16. Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron in haste; and he said, I have sinned against the Lord your God, and against you.

17. Now therefore forgive, I pray thee, my sin only this once, and entreat the Lord your God, that he may take away from me this death only.

18. And he went out from Pharaoh, and entreated the Lord.

19. And the Lord turned a mighty strong west wind, which took away the locusts, and cast them into the Red sea; there remained not one locust in all the coasts of Egypt.

20. But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go.

12. Tunc dixit Jehova Mosi, Extende manum tuam super terram Ægypti pro locusta, ut ascendat super terram Ægypti, et depascat omnem herbam terræ, quicquid a grandine residuum est.

13. Extendit itaque Moses virgam suam super terram Ægypti, et Jehova adduxit ventum orientalem in terram toto illo die, et tota nocte: et ubi advenit mane, ventus orientalis excitavit locustam.

14. Et ascenderunt locustæ super totam terram Ægypti, et demisit in omnem terminum Ægypti graves valde: ante illas non fuerunt tales locustæ, nec post illas futuræ sunt tales.

15. Operueruntque superficiem totius regionis, et obscurata fuit terra, comederuntque omnem herbam terræ atque omnem fructum arborum quem reliquerat grando, neque remansit quicquam viride in arboribus, et in herbis agri in tota terra Ægypti.

16. Tunc festinavit Pharao vocare Mosen et Aharon, et dixit, Peccavi in Jehovam Deum vestrum et vos.

17. Nunc ergo remitte quæso peccatum meum duntaxat vice hac, et orate Jehovam Deum vestrum, et auferat a me tantum mortem istam.

18. Et egressus est a Pharaone, et oravit Jehovam.

19. Et convertit Jehova ventum occidentalem fortem valde, et sustulit locustas, et dejecit eas in mare rubrum: non remansit locusta ulla in tota regione Ægypti.

20. Et roboravit Jehova cor Pharaonis, neque dimisit filios Israel.

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12. *And the Lord said unto Moses.* Since Pharaoh was not induced to obey by the announcement of the punishment, its execution is here related. And first, Moses is commanded to stretch out his hand to bring in the locusts, in right of the authority with which God had invested him; for the stretching forth of the hand is a token of power. He therefore adds, just beyond, that he stretched forth his rod, which we have before seen to have been given him as a royal sceptre. It is, then, just as if God had appointed him to be His vicegerent, and had subjected to him the sea, and earth, and air. But that he may sink down into the character of a minister, he does not say that the locusts came up at his command, but assigns the glory of the operation to the Lord alone. And this mode of expression is worthy of remark, since we learn from it that the ministers of God, although they bring nothing of their own, still do not lose their labour, because the efficacy of the Spirit is conjoined to their word; and still that nothing is detracted from the power of God and transferred to them, since they are but instruments, which by God's hand are applied in His service. Thus did not Moses in vain command, as he stretched forth his rod, the locusts to come up; because the effect of his command immediately appeared. Still he did not himself create the locusts, nor attract them by the stirring of his rod, but they were divinely brought by the power of the east wind. But so sudden a gathering unquestionably occurred contrary to the order of nature; nor, if God thus employed the wind, does it necessarily follow that this was usual. We know that the east wind is a wholesome and gentle wind, and although it is sometimes stormy with respect to Judea, still it does not seem probable that either by its strength or by its contagious blast, Egypt was covered with locusts. But it is possible that God, bringing in the immense abundance of locusts by a sudden whirlwind, gave the Egyptians a sign of their approaching calamity, so that it might be more manifest that they had not arisen otherwise than in accordance with the prediction of Moses. That "before them there were no such locusts as they, neither after them shall be such," is no contradiction to the declara-

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tion of Joel, who also affirms that such an instance had never occurred, as that the locust should eat what the palmer-worm had left; and what the locust had left the canker-worm should eat; and what the canker-worm had left the caterpillar should eat, (Joel i. 4;) for he is not there speaking of a single punishment, but of its varied and multiform continuation.

16. *Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron in haste.* This haste arose from anxiety and fear, because it was a time of extremity, and the enormity of the evil admitted no delay. By this vehemence, then, Pharaoh betrays his distress, when he not only willingly is inclined to recall Moses, whom he had lately driven out, but does so in such haste. The confession which is added, although it flowed from a double or deceitful heart, still was not altogether feigned. For we cannot doubt that (because Pharaoh was conscious of his sin) God extorted from him this cry, "I have sinned," under the smiting and compulsion of His chastisements. For we must observe this distinction, which I have already laid down, between the hypocrites who lie and deceive designedly, or who knowingly and wilfully delude others, and those who beguile themselves, and have a terror of God's judgments, even while they cherish iniquity and impiety in the secret recesses of their hearts. Pharaoh was a hypocrite of this latter kind, who, although having no professed intention of deceiving either God or Moses, yet, because he did not prove and examine himself, did not sincerely confess his sin. And this must be carefully observed, lest any should slumber in false repentance, as if temporary fear or forced humiliation could propitiate God. As to his saying, that he had "sinned against the Lord God and the Israelites," it must be thus explained, that he had been rebellious against God, because he had unjustly afflicted that people which He had taken under His care, and into His confidence. For, although he had not been taught by the Prophets, yet did he hold this principle; that, because God by plain and illustrious miracles had shewn that people to be under His defence and protection, he had by his iniquitous and tyrannical oppression of them committed an injury against their patron and guardian.

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He confesses, then, that he is doubly culpable, because he had been cruel to the people, and had impiously despised God. This would have been an evidence of true repentance, if it had proceeded from pure and genuine feeling; for the sinner, voluntarily condemning himself, prevents the judgment of God. His humiliation also appears in this respect to have been by no means ordinary, when he humbly prays to Moses for forgiveness; for it was no slight virtue, that a very powerful king should thus submit himself to an obscure and despised individual; which even the lower classes are often ashamed to do. But, inasmuch as his heart was still enchained by secret corruption, he deceitfully made a shew of the outward signs (of humiliation) instead of the reality. Wherefore David, when he declares, "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, and whose sin is covered," has good cause for adding, "and in whose spirit is no guile." (Ps. xxxii. 1, 2.) In order, therefore, that we may prove to God, whose attribute it is to search the heart, the truth of our repentance, let us learn seriously and inwardly to examine ourselves, lest there should be any hypocrisy lurking within us. The addition "only this once," is meant to testify the continuance of his better mind; as though he acknowledged that he had been hitherto perfidious, and promised that he would hereafter obey God in good earnest. Whence we gather, that the reprobate do not return immediately to their natural habits and disposition, because they are ignorant of the power and nature of true conversion, but, because being without a spirit of uprightness, they have a perverse and crooked heart. Moreover, by desiring only that this present death should be removed from him, he seems not much to care for an entire reconciliation with God; as it is usual for the wicked to be indifferent to the hatred or favour of God, and only to have a dread of His hand. Careless, then, of his sin, he merely wishes that punishment should be far removed from him.

18. *And he went out.* We have stated why the holy Prophet went out from the king to pray, viz., because he was not worthy that the sacred name of God should be invoked in his presence. Therefore Moses did not offer prayer for

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him, because he thought him to be really converted, but that he might open God's way for the remaining contests. If, indeed, a choice had been given to the holy man, I do not doubt that he would have been disposed by his extraordinary kindness of heart, willingly to provide for the tyrant's safety; but, since he had heard the revelation of his desperate obstinacy, he was only intent on manifesting the power of God. Nor is there any question that he prayed under the special impulse of the Spirit, until he was assured of the final act; and the event proves that his prayers were not vainly cast into the air, because the land was immediately cleared of the locusts. We must have the same opinion with respect to the west wind as we have lately advanced respecting the opposite wind; for a temporary blast would not have been sufficient to dissipate so vast and filthy a host; but, in both cases, God testified by a visible token that he was influenced by the prayers of His servant, and that on this account the plague was stayed. It is sufficiently well known that the Arabian Gulf is called by the name of the Red Sea. By the Hebrews it is called סוּף,[1] *suph*, either from the reeds or rushes with which it abounds, or from its whirlwinds; since this word is used in Scripture in both senses.[2] If, therefore, you choose to translate it into Latin it must be called "Mare algosum et junceum," or "turbinosum." (The weedy and rushy sea, or the tempestuous sea.) But, since there is something monstrous and incredible in such raving obstinacy, it is expressly stated that his heart was hardened by God; that we may learn to tremble at that terrible judgment, when the wicked, seized by a spirit of madness, do not hesitate to provoke more and more that God whose name overwhelms them with terror.

21. And the Lord said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, even darkness *which* may be felt.

21. Tunc dixit Jehova ad Mosen, Extende manum tuam in cœlum, ut sint tenebræ super terram Ægypti, et palpet tenebras, (*vel*, et palpentur tenebræ.)

[1] סוּף, sea-weed, סוּפָה, or tempest. In Luther's German, *Schilfmeer* preserves the original meaning of the Hebrew name for the Red Sea.— *W.*

[2] Addition in *Fr.*, "C'est par ou les enfans d' Israel ont depuis passé, comme nous verrons;" the children of Israel afterwards passed through it, as we shall see.

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22. And Moses stretched forth his hand toward heaven; and there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days:

23. They saw not one another, neither rose any from his place for three days: but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.

24. And Pharaoh called unto Moses, and said, Go ye, serve the Lord; only let your flocks and your herds be stayed: let your little ones also go with you.

25. And Moses said, Thou must give us also sacrifices and burnt-offerings, that we may sacrifice unto the Lord our God.

26. Our cattle also shall go with us; there shall not an hoof be left behind: for thereof must we take to serve the Lord our God; and we know not with what we must serve the Lord until we come thither.

27. But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let them go.

28. And Pharaoh said unto him, Get thee from me, take heed to thyself, see my face no more: for in *that* day thou seest my face thou shalt die.

29. And Moses said, Thou hast spoken well; I will see thy face again no more.

22. Et extendit Moses manum suam in cœlum: et fuerunt tenebræ caliginosæ in tota terra Ægypti tribus diebus.

23. Non videbat alter alterum, neque surrexerunt quisque e loco suo tribus diebus: at omnibus filiis Israel erat lux in habitaculis suis.

24. Tunc accersivit Pharao Mosen, et dixit, Ite, servite Jehovæ: tantum pecus vestrum et armentum vestrum remanebit: etiam parvuli vestri ibunt vobiscum.

25. Dixitque Moses, Tu quoque dabis in manu nostra sacrificia et holocausta, ut faciamus Jehovæ Deo nostro.

26. Insuper pecudes nostræ ibunt nobiscum, non remanebit ungula: quia ex eo accipiemus ad colendum Jehovam Deum nostrum: nos autem nescimus quo colemus Jehovam, donec pervenerimus illuc.

27. Et roboravit Jehova cor Pharaonis, neque voluit dimittere illos.

28. Et dixit Pharao, Recede a me, cave tibi ne amplius videas faciem meam, qua enim die videbis faciem meam, morieris.

29. Respondit Moses, Rectum dixisti, non videbo ultra faciem tuam.

21. *And the Lord said unto Moses.* God here inflicts the punishment without denouncing it; because Pharaoh had deceitfully broken his promise of being obedient to His word. Since, therefore, he had so wickedly abused God's clemency, he must needs be suddenly overtaken by a new calamity, that he might in the darkness feel God's avenging hand, which he had despised. Nor, indeed, would he have been alarmed by menaces; as it will directly appear, that, when he was warned of the death of his first-born, and of the same slaughter both upon the first-born of man and of beast through the whole land, he was unmoved, and in his security provoked God, as if he had heard nothing. There is no wonder, then, that God covered the whole land with darkness before Pharaoh could suspect anything of the kind. At

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the end of the verse, some translate the word יָמֵשׁ,[1] *yamesh*, passively; as if he had said that the darkness might be felt. For the word חֹשֶׁךְ, *choshek, darkness*,[2] is singular in Hebrew. Those who take it transitively, because they suppose it to be put indefinitely, understand a noun, with this meaning, "that a man might feel." But if the transitive sense be preferred, it will be better referred to Pharaoh. But I willingly subscribe to their opinion, who hold that the darkness was so thick that it might be felt by the hand.

22. *And Moses stretched forth his hand.* By this darkness God not only wished to reprove the blindness of Pharaoh's mind, but in every way to convince him how senseless and mad he was in his resistance. There is no blessing which is more common to all men, from the very highest even to the lowest, than light, which is enjoyed not less by the humblest and most contemptible people than by the greatest kings. It was, then, a terrible judgment of God, that the whole world should be enlightened by the sun's rays, whilst the Egyptians, although possessing sight, were plunged in darkness. What madness, then, could be greater than theirs, when in their hardness of heart they cease not to contend against God's hand, formidable as it was? Their waters turned into blood had denied them drink; frogs and other animals had filled the whole country; they had almost been consumed by lice; their limbs had been enfevered by boils; the hail had destroyed part of their corn; the locusts had brought still increased destruction; even rocks and stones should have been somewhat terrified by such warnings. This admonition, then, was very seasonable, viz., that darkness should be spread over all Egypt, that they might understand that, when God was wrath with them, the very hosts of heaven were armed against them. And, in order that God's vengeance should be neither obscure nor doubtful, the cause of the darkness could not be assigned to an eclipse, both on account of its density and the time it lasted; for both of

[1] יָמֵשׁ, the vowels determine this verb to be in the Hiphil, or active causal voice. חֹשֶׁךְ, *darkness*, comes after the verb; the ordinary position of the nominative in Hebrew. The words, therefore, should naturally mean *the darkness shall make* (a man) *feel.*—*W.*

[2] Referring, of course, to the Latin plural noun *tenebræ*.

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these circumstances are expressly noted by Moses, that it may be more clear that the sun was obscured to the Egyptians, because they had endeavoured to extinguish God's glory by their impious contempt. On the contrary, the Israelites must have acquired new cheerfulness when they recognised in the sun's brightness that God's paternal countenance was shining upon them; for He then enlightened them with His favour, as if to shew them the freedom of their egress. And, indeed, He might have at once led them forth from their astonished enemies; but He chose, as we shall see, to prepare their departure in another way.

24. *And Pharaoh called unto Moses.* We gather that he was greatly alarmed by this infliction; because of his own accord he again calls to him (as before) the men who were so troublesome to him, and the authors of such sore calamities, that he may treat with them of their departure. But it is asked how, if no one rose from his place for three days, Pharaoh could send for Moses and Aaron? If we were to answer that the messengers were sent after the darkness had been dispersed, this objection must readily arise, viz., that it does not appear probable that this untameable wild beast should be so much subdued, when the severity of the punishment was relaxed; for thus far we perceive that, as often as God withdrew his hand, the proud tyrant, having cast aside his fear, returned to his ferocity. My own opinion is, that whilst the exigency was still pressing upon him, and he feared lest the darkness should be upon him for ever, he took counsel how to appease Moses. But when it is here related, that "none rose from his place," I understand that it is spoken hyperbolically, as though it were said that they ceased from all the occupations which required light. But although the night does not allow of our executing the works in which men are employed by day, still it does not so confine them that they are unable to move about. Neither has this hyperbole[1] anything harsh or severe in it, that the Egyptians were so overwhelmed with darkness as to remain each one fixed as it were in his own place, and not to behold each other; because in the three days' darkness God forbade them from

[1] Excez de parler.—*Fr.*

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performing their customary actions. Although Pharaoh is prepared to accord somewhat more than before, still he does not make an end of shuffling. He allows their little ones to go, provided their herds remain ; either because he hoped that the people might easily be recalled through fear of famine ; or because his loss would be at any rate less, if he were enriched by such spoils. For it is plain that he was very anxious about the men themselves, because he so very reluctantly made the concession that they might go out to sacrifice without their goods ; which he would not have been unwilling to do, if he had only been desirous of spoiling them. But this passage again teaches us, that the wicked only partially yield to God, though they cease not meanwhile to struggle like malefactors, who are compelled to follow the executioner when he drags them by a rope round their necks, and yet are not on that account any the more obedient. This, too, is to be observed, that the wicked are quick in inventing subterfuges, when they are suffering under God's hand, and that they turn and twist about in every direction to discover plans for escaping from a sincere and hearty submission. When he says, " let your little ones *also* go with you," by this particle of amplification he would make a specious shew of generosity, in order to cajole Moses and Aaron ; as if he said, that he now at length granted them what they had seemed chiefly to require.

25. *And Moses said.* Moses no less severely repudiates all exceptions, than as if he authoritatively demanded of the king what God had enjoined. And assuredly, by this austere[1] and abrupt manner of speaking he evidenced his courage, whereby he might humble the arrogance and audacity of the impious king. His pretext indeed was, that they had need of victims, and in this way he avoids the tyrant's greater displeasure ; but, at the same time, by directly excluding all conditions, and by not leaving even a hair in the power of the king, he asserts the indivisible right of God alone ; that Pharaoh may know that all his evasions will profit him nothing. The expression " there shall not a hoof be left behind," contains a severe reproof, accom-

[1] Magistrale.—*Fr.*

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panied with anger and contempt; as if he would purposely pique[1] the virulent mind of the tyrant. But we have already said that there was no dissimulation in these words: for, although the holy man knew that the counsel of God had a further object, he still thought it sufficient to deliver the commands which were prescribed to him; nor would it be proper to suppose that God is under an obligation always to make the wicked acquainted with all His purposes.

27. *But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart.* A probable conjecture may be elicited from hence, that at the coming of Moses some light shone forth, so that the darkness was not so thick; because Pharaoh would never have dared to boast himself so proudly without being confident of impunity; but his pretences at the commencement (of their interview) are here omitted by Moses, though the mitigation of the horrible punishment which had urged him to supplication depended upon them. But although he is still in a state of alarm, still he is hardened, and prepares himself for every extremity rather than simply to obey God. Here, also, according to his custom, Moses asserts that God was the author of his obduracy; not because He inspired with obstinacy a heart otherwise disposed to docility and obedience, but because He gave over as a slave to Satan a reprobate who was wilfully devoted to his own destruction, that he might rush forward with still increasing pertinacity in his impiety. But, since Moses has so often used this word, I am astonished at the boldness of certain sophists who, by the substitution of the word *permission*, allow themselves by this frivolous evasion to escape so plain a statement.

28. *And Pharaoh said unto him.* This ebullition of passion, in the midst of such sore calamities, is a proof of the violent assaults by which Satan precipitates the wicked, when they are given over to a reprobate mind. The imperiousness of kings is indeed notorious, and observed by the ancient poets;[2] "Animadverte, et dicto pare," (attend, and

[1] The *Fr.* thus resolves the metaphor:—"Comme s'il picquoit de propos deliberé le courage envenimé du tyran, pour en faire crever l'aposthume;" as if he purposely *lanced* the envenomed audacity of the tyrant, to let out its *matter*.

[2] Cicero pro C. Rabirio Postumo, c. xi. "Nemo nostrum ignorat, etiam

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obey my word ;) and, again, "Moriere, si te secundo lumine hic offendero," (if I meet thee here again a second day, thou shalt die.) Nor can it be doubted that Pharaoh, with his usual intemperateness, now breaks out into fierce and cruel threats; but had he not been carried away by a spirit of madness, he would not have so boldly opposed himself to God's servant, whom he had so often known, by experience, to be endued with unconquerable power, and to be so accredited by God, as to have supreme dominion over all the elements. Hence, also, we gather, that he had not been hitherto restrained from treating Moses with severity either by kindness, or moderation, or patience; because, when the circumstances of his kingdom were still flourishing, his wrath would have been more excessive; but that he was kept back by some secret rein. But Moses shews by his answer, how completely he set at nought all this froth; for he voluntarily defies him, and by declaring that he will come before his face no more, signifies that he is not worthy that he should labour any longer in his favour. But we see that the wicked king, carried away by his fury, prophesied against the wishes of his own mind, for God returned upon his own head what he threatened against another. Although, at the same time, it must be remembered that Moses spoke thus not without authority, but by God's command; because, unless he had been certainly taught that the last trial was come, he would have ever stood in readiness for the performance of his part. But it will presently appear from the context, that in this saying also he was the true messenger of God.

CHAPTER ELEVENTH.

1. And the Lord said unto Moses, Yet will I bring one plague *more* upon Pharaoh, and upon Egypt; afterwards he will let you go hence:

1. Dixerat autem Jehova ad Mosen, Adhuc plagam unam adducam super Pharaonem, et super Ægyptum: postea dimittet vos hinc, di-

si experti non sumus, consuetudinem regiam. Regum autem hæc sunt imperia: *Animadverte et dicto pare:* et *præter rogitatum si quærare:* et illæ minæ, *Si te secundo lumine hic offendero, moriere.*" In the *Variorum* edition, Elzevir, 1661, there is the following note:—"*Animadverte, &c.*, Explicat isthæc Columna commentariis suis ad *Q. Ennium.*"

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when he shall let *you* go, he shall surely thrust you out hence altogether.

2. Speak now in the ears of the people, and let every man borrow of his neighbour, and every woman of her neighbour, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold.

3. And the Lord gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians. Moreover, the man Moses *was* very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's servants, and in the sight of the people.

4. And Moses said, Thus saith the Lord, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt:

5. And all the first-born in the land of Egypt shall die, from the first-born of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the first-born of the maid-servant that *is* behind the mill; and all the first-born of beasts.

6. And there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it any more.

7. But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast; that ye may know how that the Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.

8. And all these thy servants shall come down unto me, and bow down themselves unto me, saying, Get thee out, and all the people that follow thee: and after that I will go out. And he went out from Pharaoh in a great anger.

9. And the Lord said unto Moses, Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you; that my wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt.

10. And Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh: and the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go out of his land.

mittendo vos perfecte: expellendo expellet vos hinc.

2. Loquere nunc in auribus populi, ut petant quisque a proximo suo, et mulier a proxima sua vasa argentea et vasa aurea.

3. Et dabit Jehova gratiam populo in oculis Ægyptiorum. Etiam vir Moses magnus erat valde in terra Ægypti, in oculis servorum Pharaonis, et in oculis populi.

4. Et dixit Moses, Sic dicit Jehova, Circiter dimidium noctis ego egrediar in medium Ægypti.

5. Morieturque omne primogenitum in terra Ægypti, a primogenito Pharaonis qui sedet super solium ejus, usque ad primogenitum ancillæ quæ est post molam, et omne primogenitum jumenti.

6. Et erit clamor magnus in tota terra Ægypti, qualis nunquam fuit, nec futurus est.

7. Apud omnes autem filios Israel non movebit canis linguam suam, ab homine usque ad animal, ut sciatis quod distinctionem posuit Deus inter Ægyptios et inter Israel.

8. Descendentque omnes hi servi tui ad me, et adorabunt me, dicendo, Egredere tu et totus populus qui est sub pedibus tuis: postea egrediar. Et egressus est a Pharaone in ira vehementi.

9. Dixerat autem Jehova ad Mosen, Non audiet vos Pharao, ut multiplicem portenta mea in terra Ægypti.

10. Itaque Moses et Aharon fecerunt omnia hæc portenta coram Pharaone. Et roboravit Jehova cor Pharaonis, ut non dimitteret filios Israel e terra sua.

1. *And the Lord said unto Moses.*[1] He now relates that it was not with self-conceived confidence that he was lately so

[1] See *Lat.*, Dixerat autem.

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elated, as we have seen him ;[1] but because he had been forewarned by divine revelation that the end of the contests was now near, and that nothing now remained but that Pharaoh should fall by his mortal wound. This verse, then, is connected with the preceding, and explains its cause; because Moses would not have been at liberty to interrupt the course of his vocation, unless he had now plainly known that he was arriving at its conclusion. Nor would it otherwise agree with what follows, viz., that Moses spoke to Pharaoh after he had declared that he would not appear any more in his sight, unless the subject were continued without interruption. But this sentence is introduced parenthetically, (meaning) that however obstinate Pharaoh might be, the hour was now come in which he must succumb to God. But God not only declares that the heart of Pharaoh should be changed, so that he would not hinder the people's departure, but that he would be himself anxious for that which he had so pertinaciously refused ; for this is the meaning of the words, he will not only send you away, but altogether thrust you out. For in his alarm at their presence, he eagerly drove them from his kingdom.

2. *Speak now in the ears of the people.* He repeats His command as to spoiling the Egyptians, of which mention was made in the third chapter, for it was not enough for God to rescue His people from that cruel tyranny under which their wretched lives were scarcely protracted in great poverty and distress, unless He also enriched them with large possessions, as if they were carrying away the prizes of victory from conquered enemies. This, therefore, was the consummation of His otherwise extraordinary bounty, that they departed splendidly adorned,[2] and laden with precious furniture. We have already explained how it was lawful for the Israelites to take away with them the golden and silver vessels under pretext of borrowing them.[3] Surely the sole authority of God absolves them from the accusation of theft and sinful

[1] " Tellement que sa confiance le fait parler haut;" as to be led by his confidence to use such high language.—*Fr.*

[2] " Chargez de bagues, meubles, et vaisselles precieuses;" laden with rings, furniture, and precious vessels. —*Fr.*

[3] See notes on chap. iii. 22.

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deception. But it cannot be permitted to any mortal man to censure or cavil at anything in the commandment of God; not only because His decree is above all laws, but because His most perfect will is the rule of all laws. For neither therefore is God unanswerable to law, because He delights in uncontrollable power; but because in the perfection of His infinite justice there is no need of law. But although the excuse which some allege is not altogether without shew of reason, viz., that the very severe labours which the Egyptians had tyrannically exacted were worthy of some reward, and therefore that God had justly permitted His people to exact the compensation of which they would have been otherwise unjustly defrauded, still there is no necessity for having recourse to these subtleties; for that principle, which we have elsewhere laid down, ought to be sufficient, that God, in whose hands are the ends of the earth, to destroy and to overturn at His will its kingdoms, and to change the government of its nations, much more (has the right) so to distribute the wealth and possessions of individuals, as to enrich some and to reduce others to want. "The rich and poor meet together, (says Solomon:) the Lord is maker of them all," (Prov. xxii. 2;) by which words he means that the providence of God rules in the various mixing together of poor and rich. But if theft be the taking away of what is another's, those things which it has pleased God to transfer to His own people, must not be counted the property of others. But if by the laws of war it be permitted to the victors to gather up the spoil of the enemy, why should we consider it less allowable for God to do so from the Egyptians, whom He had overcome in ten illustrious battles, before He compelled them to surrender? As to the pretence of borrowing, the reply is easy, for the Israelitish women did not lie when they asked for the vessels for the purpose of sacrifice: since God had thus commanded, in whose power it was afterwards to devote them to other uses. Still part of them were dedicated to the sanctuary, as we shall see elsewhere; for besides the altar, the censer, and the candlestick, and other vessels of that kind, each of the tribes offered vials and dishes of great value. Yet must we recol-

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lect that a particular case is here related, imitation of which, without God's special command, would be wrong.

3. *And the Lord gave*[1] *the people favour.* Because the Israelites never could have hoped that the Egyptians, who had before rapaciously stripped them of everything, would become so kind and liberal to them, Moses declares that men's hearts are turned this way or that by God. For, as the Psalm testifies, that the Egyptians were impelled by Him "to hate His people," (Ps. cv. 25,) that He might make way for their glorious deliverance; so He was able also to incline them in the opposite direction, that they should freely give what they had before harshly refused, and not without threats and blows. This doctrine is exceedingly useful to be known, because, when men are harsh and cruel to us, it teaches us patience, whilst we are assured that the passions of wicked men only thus assail us, in so far as God would chastise our sins, and exercise and humble us. It affords also no little consolation to alleviate our pains, and seasonably arouses us to call upon God, that He would turn the minds of our enemies from brutality and unkindness to gentleness. It appears from many passages that this was ever the persuasion of all the pious, and unquestionably the expression of Jacob to his sons, "God Almighty give (*dabit*) you mercy before the man," was founded on this general feeling. (Gen. xliii. 14.) But, since Scripture is full of such testimonies, let it suffice to have quoted this single one. Again, God does not always incline men to mercy, by the Spirit of regeneration, so that they should be changed from wolves to lambs; but sometimes by His secret inspiration He for a short time softens them though they know it not, as we read here of the Egyptians. In the second clause of the verse, where it is said, "Moreover the man Moses," &c., an inferior and subordinate reason is given, which availed both to change the Egyptians as well as to encourage the Israelites, so that both of them reverently deferred to his words; for although this whole matter was governed by the power of God alone, still He did not act simply by Himself,

[1] *Lat.*, "dabit."

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but having chosen Moses as His minister, He assigned[1] a certain charge to him. Hence the veneration which made the Egyptians as well as the Israelites obedient to him, that his labour might not be in vain. He only speaks, indeed, of the Egyptian nation, (for after having spoken of "the land" first, he adds two divisions, "Pharaoh's servants," *i.e.*, the nobles and courtiers, and then "the common people," for so in this place I understand the word "people;") but we shall soon see that the miracles had had a good effect upon the Israelites also, that they should more readily believe and obey. But this passage teaches us that God's servants are often prized and honoured, where yet faith in their doctrine is not possessed, for although the Egyptians reverence and highly esteem Moses, they do not therefore incline to seek[2] after piety. And thus the wicked often fear God Himself, when influenced by particular circumstances, and yet do not devote themselves to His service.

4. *And Moses said, Thus saith the Lord.* I lately said that Moses did not go from Pharaoh's presence until he had delivered the message of his final destruction. This denunciation is, therefore, connected with the foregoing passage. Whence it appears how courageously Moses sustained the menaces of the tyrant, whilst he willingly encounters him, and boasts that he shall be his conqueror, though he be not in his presence, by the death of his first-born son in the coming night. Nor is it to be doubted that Pharaoh was confounded with terror, since, although so cruelly repulsed, he dismissed the Prophet in safety. Assuredly, since so unreserved a threatening must have inflicted a very bitter pang, so it would have aroused the cruelty of the raging tyrant, unless the same God who had endued His servant with admirable firmness, had also controlled the impetuosity of the savage beast. Why God, in inflicting punishment on the children, postponed till another time that of the fathers, whose sin was greater; why, in wreaking vengeance on the beasts, He spared men, it is not our province curiously to

[1] "Il luy a laissé ce qui estoit de sa charge et vocation;" he left to him what pertained to his charge and calling.—*Fr.*

[2] "A craindre Dieu d'une droite affection."—*Fr.*

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inquire, because[1] it is sinful to prescribe to God, whose incomprehensible wisdom surmounts all human understanding, what should be the rule or measure of His judgments. By bringing the children and beasts to punishment, He certainly represented clearly to the wicked despisers of His power, what they had deserved. The first-born of Pharaoh, who would have been heir of the kingdom, is placed in the first rank of victims; afterwards the whole body of humbler people is mentioned, for the maid-servants, who turned their revolving mills, occupied a very low and despised condition, as appears not only from the ancient poets, but from the testimony of Scripture itself. (1 Sam. viii. 16.) If any one chooses to observe the analogy between this plague and the unjust tyranny by which the Egyptians had afflicted *Israel*, God's first-born son, I make no objection. God again puts a difference between the Egyptians and his own people, when he declares that, in the midst of the great cry, the latter shall be quiet and tranquil. For this is the meaning of the figure, "A dog shall not move his tongue," because dogs are wont to bark at the very least noise in the night. Moreover, although such a separation between the faithful and unbelievers does not always appear, but rather do similar punishments generally involve them both together, yet in the final issue God divides them very widely one from the other. Wherefore we can never lose this felicity, that we know that all afflictions conspire unto the salvation of us, whom he has once embraced with His loving-kindness.

8. *And all these thy servants shall come down.* Thus far Moses had reported the words of God; he now begins to speak in his own person, and announces that, by Pharaoh's command, messengers would come from his court, who would voluntarily and humbly crave for what he had refused respecting the dismissal of the Israelites. The great asperity of these words inflicted no slight wound on the tyrant's mind, for it was the same as if he had said—Thus far I have entreated you to allow God's people to depart; now, whether you will or not, I will freely go, and not even without the

[1] "Ce seroit un orgueil trop enorme;" it would be too enormous an impertinence.—*Fr.*

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request of yourself and your followers. What he then relates, that he went out "in the heat of anger,"[1] or "in a great anger," shews us that the servants of God, even when they truly and faithfully perform their duty, are so disturbed with indignation against sin, that they are by no means restrained from being affected with anger. Nor is there any question that Moses was thus excited to wrath by the impulse of the Spirit. Yet, since we are naturally too prone to impetuous passions, we must diligently beware lest our indignation exceed due bounds. The Spirit awakened in the heart of Moses this zeal, which here is mentioned, but he at the same time moderated it, so that it should contain no admixture of unregulated passion. But since it may, and often does happen that the faithful, when influenced by pious zeal, still do not sufficiently restrain themselves, nor keep themselves within due bounds, the spirit of gentleness and propriety must be asked of God, which may prevent all excesses. Yet the anger of Moses is a proof to us that God would not have us lazily and coldly perform the duties which He entrusts to us; and, therefore, that nothing is more preposterous than for certain cynics, whilst they jokingly and ridiculously philosophize concerning the doctrines of religion, and sting God's servants with their laughing and wanton witticisms, to deride their vehemence, which is rather worthy of the highest praise.

9. *And the Lord said unto Moses.* This seems to be a representation of the reason why Moses was so angry; viz., because he had been forewarned that he had to do with a lost and desperate man. When, therefore, after so many contests, he sees the dominion of God despised by the audacity and madness of the tyrant, deeper indignation bursts from him in their last struggle; especially because he sees before his eyes that detestable prodigy, viz., an earthen vessel so bold as to provoke God with indomitable obstinacy. But God had foretold to Moses (as we have already seen) the end of this his exceeding stubbornness, lest, having so often suffered repulse, he should faint at length. Otherwise, there might have crept in no trifling temptation, as to how it

[1] Margin, *A. V.*

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could please God to contend in vain with a mortal man. And it was absurd that the hardness of a human heart could not be either subdued, or corrected, or broken by the divine power. God, therefore, asserts that He was thus designing His own glory, which he desired to manifest by various miracles; and on this account he adds again in the next verse, that Pharaoh's heart was again hardened by God Himself; whereby he signifies, that the tyrant thus pertinaciously resisted, not without the knowledge and will of God, in order that the deliverance might be more wonderful.

CHAPTER TWELFTH.

21. Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said unto them, Draw out, and take you a lamb, according to your families, and kill the passover.

22. And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip *it* in the blood that *is* in the bason, and strike the lintel and the two side-posts with the blood that *is* in the bason; and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning.

23. For the Lord will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side-posts, the Lord will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite *you*.

24. And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons for ever.

25. And it shall come to pass, when ye be come to the land which the Lord will give you, according as he hath promised, that ye shall keep this service.

26. And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service?

27. That ye shall say, It *is* the sacrifice of the Lord's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he

21. Vocavit ergo Moses omnes seniores Israel, et dixit ad eos, Extrahite et tollite vobis pecudem pro familiis vestris, et mactate Pesah.

22. Accipietis quoque fasciculum hyssopi, et intingetis in sanguine qui erit in pelvi, et projicietis in superliminare et in utrunque postem de sanguine qui erit in vase. Vos autem non egrediemini quisque ex hostio domus suæ usque mane.

23. Et transibit Jehova ad percutiendam Ægyptum: ubi autem viderit sanguinem in superliminari et in duobus postibus, tunc transiliet Jehova januam illam, neque permittet vastatorem ingredi domos vestras ad percutiendum.

24. Observabitis sermonem hunc in edictum, tibi et filiis tuis usque in sæculum.

25. Et quum ingressi fueritis terram quam dabit Jehova vobis, sicut pollicitus est, tunc observabitis cultum hunc.

26. Et erit quum dixerint vobis filii vestri, Quis est cultus hic vester?

27. Tunc dicetis, Hæc est oblatio Pesah Jehovæ, qui transivit domos filiorum Israel in Ægypto, quum percuteret Ægyptum, et domos nos-

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smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head, and worshipped.

28. And the children of Israel went away, and did as the Lord had commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they.

tras liberavit. Et incurvavit se populus, et adoravit.

28. Abierunt itaque et fecerunt filii Israel sicut præceperat Jehova Mosi et Aharon; sic, *inquam*, fecerunt.

I have here omitted what Moses has related in the beginning of the chapter up to this verse, because it pertains to the perpetual doctrine of the Law. I shall hereafter insert it in its proper place. But, since here also God gave precepts as to the observation of the Passover, I have thought it right to interweave them with the history; because Moses does not merely teach here what God would have observed by His people in all ages, but relates what He required on a particular occasion. But my readers are to be reminded that some precepts are temporary, and some perpetual, like the Law itself. Of this we may see a clear and familiar example in the chapter before us. For up to this place, Moses had explained what would be the due observation of the Passover year by year for ever; but now he only relates historically, that, on the night in which the people went forth, they celebrated the Passover according to God's command. I shall, therefore, lightly touch upon what is here repeated; since a more fitting place for a full exposition will be, when we come to the doctrine of the law. The word פֶּסַח,[1] *pesech*, means a *passing-over*, not of the people, (as many have falsely thought,) but of God Himself, who passed over the houses of the Israelites without harm, when He slew the first-born in all Egypt. Since, then, the wrath of God, which then like a deluge covered the whole of Egypt, left the Israelites untouched, He instituted a memorial of His *passing-over*, whereby they had been preserved in safety amidst the public destruction of the whole land. He is also said to have passed-over the Egyptians, whom He deprived of their first-born; but after a

[1] פסח. So. *Seb. M.* A leaping, or passing-over. It is well known that this version has been discussed and defended at considerable length by Archbishop Magee, in No. xxxv. of the Illustrations to his First Discourse on the Atonement. See Calvin's farther explanations, when he comments on verse 1 of this chapter.—*W.*

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different manner, because He spared His chosen ones, as if they had been far away, or protected in places of sure refuge.

21. *Then Moses called for all the elders.* His address is especially directed to the elders, that they might afterwards repeat it to the multitude; for he could not have been heard at the same time by so great a number of people. But, although the disorganization of the people had been terrible under that severe tyranny, still God willed that certain relics of order should be preserved, and did not suffer those, whom He had adopted, to be deprived of all government. This also had been an availing means of preserving their unity, so that the chosen seed of Abraham should not be lost. But Moses here only speaks of the sprinkling of the blood; because he had already addressed them as to the eating of the lamb. He therefore commands branches of hyssop to be dipped in the blood, which had been caught in the basin, and every one's lintel and two side-posts to be sprinkled with this. By which sign God testified that He will preserve His people from the common destruction, because they will be discerned from the wicked by the mark of blood. For it was necessary that the Israelites should first be reminded, that by the expiation of the sacrifice, they were delivered from the plague, and their houses preserved untouched; and, secondly, that the sacrifice would profit them, only if its conspicuous sign existed among them. We elsewhere see that the Paschal lamb was a type of Christ, who by His death propitiated His Father, so that we should not perish with the rest of the world. But, already of old time, He desired to bear witness to the ancients under the Law, that He would not be reconciled to them otherwise than through the sacrifice of a victim. And there is no doubt that by this visible symbol He raised up their minds to that true and heavenly Exemplar, whom it would be absurd and profane to separate from the ceremonies of the law. For what could be more childish than to offer the blood of an animal as a protection against the hand of God, or to seek from thence a ground of safety? God, then, shews that He spares the Israelites on no other condition but that of sacrifice; from whence it follows, that the death of Christ was set before them in this

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ordinance, which alone constituted the difference between them and the Egyptians. But at the same time He taught that no advantage was to be expected from the blood poured forth, without the sprinkling; not that the external and visible sprinkling produced any good effect, but because by this familiar rite it was useful that the ignorant should be brought to perceive the truth, and that they might know that what was put before them visibly must be spiritually fulfilled. It is notorious from the testimony of Peter, (1 Pet. i. 2,) that our souls are sprinkled with the blood of Christ by the Spirit. This was typified by the bunch of hyssop,[1] which herb possesses great cleansing power, and therefore, was often used in other sacrifices also, as we shall hereafter see in the proper places.

23. *For the Lord will pass through.* He forbids them to go out during the night, lest they should mix themselves with the Egyptians, but commands them to keep quietly under the protection of the blood. By this sign they were admonished that they also were exposed to destruction, if they did not separate themselves from the unbelievers under the safeguard of the blood. Afterwards the promise is added, that, provided this were done, the angel would pass them over, and inflict no injury upon them, because God would acknowledge the houses so marked as His own. Wherefore, it is again repeated, that they should alone be safe by the blessing of the blood, who should not neglect to sprinkle themselves with it; because faith alone confers upon us the salvation which is obtained by the slaughter of the victim. The angel, whom God had delegated for afflicting Egypt, is here undoubtedly called "the destroyer;" and, although He often executes His judgments by evil angels,

[1] There has been much discussion as to the plant to which this name is given. "In no instance," says the Illustrated Commentary, "has any plant been suggested, that at the same time had a sufficient length of stem, to answer the purpose of a wand or pole, and such detergent qualities, as to render it a fit emblem of purification." The author himself has no question but that it was of the genus *Phytolacca;* which combines, in a remarkable manner, these two qualities. Dr. Royle, however, considers it to have been the caper-plant, (*Capparis spinosa,*) which possesses another important condition wanting in the *Phytolacca*, viz., that it still grows in the countries to which it is attributed in Scripture.

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it is to be gathered from other passages that this was one of the elect angels, who also was the minister of the people's deliverance under Christ as the Head.

25. *When ye come into the land.* He now adds that this rite must be annually observed, in order that the memory of this extraordinary grace might never perish. But since a commandment is given respecting the continual observation[1] of the Sabbath, I postpone its explanation to a more appropriate place; except I would cursorily remark, that the proclamation of the blessing is annexed to the sign; because otherwise it would be an empty and unmeaning proceeding. God, therefore, would have the fathers proclaim it unto their children, so that the knowledge of their redemption, being handed down by tradition, may flourish in all ages. The word עבד,[2] *gnebod,* some have improperly rendered "work," whereas it is rather used for "worship;" as in many passages to serve God means the same as to worship Him. We too, in French, call whatever relates to the exercises of piety "God's service." Finally, Moses adds that the people professed their faith and obedience by solemn adoration. This indeed they had already done from the beginning, but with little constancy, because they had been so harassed by their afflictions as to neglect their duty; but now they correct the fault of ingratitude. Therefore, they not only declare their feelings of seriousness by bowing the head, but give actual proof of them; for it is expressly said, that they diligently performed whatever was commanded.

29. And it came to pass, that at midnight the Lord smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt, from the first-born of Pharaoh that sat on his throne, unto the first-born of the captive that *was* in the dungeon; and all the first-born of cattle.

30. And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt: for *there was* not a house where *there was* not one dead.

29. Et factum est in medio noctis ut percuteret Jehova omne primogenitum in terra Ægypti, a primogenito Pharaonis sedente super solium ejus, ad primogenitum captivi qui erat in carcere: et omne primogenitum bestiæ.

30. Surrexit ergo Pharao nocte, ipse et omnes servi ejus, et omnes Ægyptii: fuitque clamor magnus in Ægypto, quoniam nulla erat domus ubi non esset mortuus.

[1] The word "Sabbath," which is not translated in the French, is probably an accidental interpolation.

[2] עבדה. Est servitus et ministerium. Hic vero accipitur pro ritu. *S. M.—W.*

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31. And he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, Rise up, *and* get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel; and go, serve the Lord, as ye have said.

32. Also take your flocks and your herds, as ye have said, and be gone: and bless me also.

33. And the Egyptians were urgent upon the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste; for they said, We *be* all dead *men.*

34. And the people took their dough before it was leavened, their kneading-troughs being bound up in their clothes upon their shoulders.

35. And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses; and they borrowed of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment.

36. And the Lord gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they lent unto them *such things as they required:* and they spoiled the Egyptians.

37. And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot *that were* men, besides children.

38. And a mixed multitude went up also with them; and flocks, and herds, *even* very much cattle.

39. And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they brought forth out of Egypt, for it was not leavened; because they were thrust out of Egypt, and could not tarry, neither had they prepared for themselves any victual.

31. Vocavitque Mosen et Aharon nocte, et ait, Surgite, et exite e medio populi mei tam vos quam filii Israel: ite et servite Jehovæ secundum sermonem vestrum.

32. Etiam greges vestros, etiam armenta vestra accipite: sicuti dixistis: et ite, ac benedicite etiam mihi.

33. Et vehementer instabant Ægyptii erga populum ut festinanter eos emitterent e terra: quia dicebant, Omnes sumus mortui.

34. Tulit ergo populus conspersionem suam antequam fermentaretur, cibos suos ligatos in vestibus super humerum suum.

35. Fecerunt autem filii Israel secundum sermonem Mosis, ut postularent ab Ægyptiis vasa argentea, et vasa aurea, et vestes.

36. Et dedit Jehova gratiam populo in oculis Ægyptiorum, et commodaverunt eis: itaque spoliaverunt Ægyptios.

37. Profectique sunt filii Israel e Ramesses in Sucoth circiter sexcenta millia peditum et *quidem* virorum, præter parvulos.

38. Atque etiam mixtio multa ascendit cum eis, et pecudes et boves, pecus copiosum valde.

39. Et coxerunt conspersionem quam extulerant ex Ægypto, placentas infermentatas, quia non erat fermentatum, eo quod ejecti fuissent ex Ægypto, nec potuissent morari, ideoque cibum non paraverant sibi.

29. *And it came to pass, that at midnight.* Lest the hand of God should be hidden in this miracle, as well in the preservation of the people as in taking vengeance upon the Egyptians, Moses sets forth its power by many circumstances. For he both relates that the destruction took place at midnight, which was the time prescribed by God, and then adds, that all the first-born of the land were smitten, from the son of the king to the son of the captive in the dungeon. It is

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thus that he indicates proverbially the most abject persons, as he had said before, "unto the first-born of the maid-servant that is behind the mill." For it could only be by an extraordinary miracle that this calamity could affect every house without exception, at the same hour, especially when it extended even to the beasts. *Thirdly*, he recounts that all the Egyptians were aroused suddenly, and manifestly convinced that the God of Israel was wroth with them. *Fourthly*, that Pharaoh humbly prayed of Moses to lead forth the people in haste; nay, that he even importunately thrust them out. Yet not even by such clear and solid proofs has the dishonesty and impudence of some been prevented from attempting to upset by their falsehoods this memorable work of God. The calumnies are too well known which Josephus refutes in his reply to Apion the Grammarian; and it appears from Justin[1] that they were generally received. Nor can we wonder that the devil should have employed all sorts of artifices, so that by the introduction of various fables he might efface from men's minds the redemption of the Church. But here also was manifested the admirable wisdom of God, that the futility of these absurdities refutes itself, without the use of any arguments against them. Perhaps there was no intention to deceive on the part of profane writers, when they reported these frivolous and silly stories about the Jews; for doubtless Strabo[2] desired to give the true history of the origin of circumcision when he wrote his foolish and unfounded fables. Nor did even Cornelius Tacitus,[3] although he wrote with malignant and virulent feelings, intentionally put himself to shame; but when by the impulse of Satan they obscured God's glory, they were smitten with blindness and folly, so that their ridiculous want of truth might be discovered even by children; from whence, however, some sparks of fact may still be elicited, because God would not suffer so memorable an operation to be altogether forgotten, of which these blind men were the proclaimers, when the devil was using their aid to obliterate its memory.

[1] *Vide* Justini Hist., lib. xxxvi. cap. 2.
[2] *Vide* Strabonis Geog., lib. xvii.
[3] C. Tacit. Hist., v. 3, 4.

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31. *And he called for Moses.* It is not probable that God's servants were recalled into the presence of Pharaoh; but the sense of this passage must be sought for in the prediction of Moses. Pharaoh, therefore, is said to have called them, when, by sending to them his chief courtiers, he compelled their departure. And this is sufficiently proved by the context, because it is immediately added, that the Israelites were by the Egyptians compelled to go out in haste. Therefore, although Pharaoh never should have seen Moses from the time that he threatened him with death if he came to him again, there is nothing absurd in saying that he called for him when he sent his nobles to him with his command. The perturbation of an alarmed and anxious person is expressed to the life in these words,—"Rise up, get you forth, both ye and your children; go, serve the Lord; also take your flocks and your herds, as ye have said." For he takes no less precaution lest he should give any occasion for delay, than he had before been diligent in bargaining. Whilst, then, he hastily cuts off all objections, the change in the man betrays itself, for the same God who had before hardened his iron heart has now broken it. Hence, too, that cry—the signal of despair—"We be all dead men;" hence, too, their readiness to give willingly of their substance, and to dress up in spoils those whom they had pillaged before. Nor indeed does he without reason repeat that this favour proceeded from divine inspiration, since there would never have been such liberality in robbers as willingly to proffer whatever precious things their houses possessed, and to give them to the Israelites, now ready to depart, whom they knew to be justly hostile to them on account of so many injuries. And that the children of Israel should be so prompt to obey, who before had been either slow, or inconstant, or sullen, or rebellious, was brought about by the guidance of the Spirit, who turned their hearts in a moment; since God well knew how to dispose opportunely all the springs of action.

37. *And the children of Israel journeyed.* Although it is probable that they were more widely dispersed, since that district could not have contained so great a multitude,

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especially when the Egyptians occupied it together with them; still because the recollection of the promise remained among them, from whence some hope of their redemption always was preserved, it is not wonderful that they should have preferred to be kept within narrow bounds, to their great inconvenience, rather than, by seeking other habitations, to separate from the main body. That this was the peculiar abode of the nation is plain also from what has gone before, where Moses related that they were forced to servile tasks in building those fortified cities wherein they might be shut up, as in prison. In the number of men which he reports, he commends the incredible miracle of God's favour in increasing and multiplying their race. Thus is the effrontery of the impious refuted who think it a sufficient ground for their sneers, that this great people could not in so short a time have naturally proceeded from a single family; and therefore they burst out into unrestrained and blasphemous laughter, as if Moses were simply relating what had happened, and not rather extolling the extraordinary power of God in the sudden increase of His Church. But we know that it was no more a matter of difficulty for the Creator of the whole world to exceed the ordinary course of nature, in the multiplication of a particular nation, than at the beginning to produce speedily many people from one man and woman; and again, after the deluge, to renew the human race by a miraculous augmentation. Now, this is the peculiar character of the Church, that in producing and preserving it, God exerts unusual power, that it may be separated from the common condition of mankind; for although it sojourns on earth, yet is its nature in a manner heavenly, that the work of God may shine forth more brightly in it. No wonder then if, contrary to usual custom, it should emerge, as it were, from nothing, if it grows in the same way and makes continual progress. Such an example does Paul set before us in Rom. iv., in the person of Abraham. But whilst the impious despisers of God betray their stupidity in their wicked audacity, when they estimate this work of God by their own senses and by common reason, so, too, do they foolishly err who attempt to defend Moses by philosophical

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arguments; for his intention was very different, viz., to shew that the promises were not unfulfilled, "I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore," (Gen. xxii. 17, and xii. 2, and xv. 5,) the effect of which promises was beyond human comprehension.

38. *And a mixed multitude.* Although Abraham possessed many servants, yet is it scarcely probable that in the famine Jacob maintained any other persons in his family besides his own children, whom he could hardly so sustain as to preserve them from dying of hunger. And since Moses, in relating their coming into Egypt, does not mention any servants, we may conjecture that they brought no great number, because necessity compelled them to be content at any rate with a few. From hence we gather that the mixed multitude, which united themselves with the Israelites, were either the offspring of Egypt, or had migrated from the neighbouring countries to take up their habitation there; as fertile lands often attract many strangers to them by the pleasures of abundance. The same expression is used in Nehemiah (xiii. 3,) where it is said that "the mixed multitude" was separated from the true Israelites, lest all should promiscuously arrogate to themselves the same dignity, and thus the Church should be polluted by a confused admixture. But if any should think it absurd that ungodly men, with no better hope before them, would voluntarily forsake a rich and convenient habitation in order to seek a new home as wanderers and pilgrims, let him recollect that Egypt had now been afflicted by so many calamities that by its very poverty and devastation it might easily have driven away its inhabitants. A great part of the cattle had perished; all the fruits of the earth were corrupted; the fields were ravaged and almost desert; we need not, therefore, wonder if despair should have caused many sojourners to fly away, and even some of the natives themselves. It may be also that, having been inhumanly treated, they shook off the yoke of tyranny when a way to liberty was opened to them.

But although God gave His people a ready departure, still He did not choose to let them go out altogether without any inconvenience; for they go not out satiated with food,

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nor having delicately supped, but are compelled to carry in their bags unbaked masses of dough, that they may eat bread burned or toasted on the embers in their journey. By this example we are taught that God's blessings are always mingled with certain inconveniences, lest too great delight should corrupt the minds of the godly.

40. Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, *was* four hundred and thirty years.

41. And it came to pass, at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the self-same day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt.

42. It *is* a night to be much observed unto the Lord for bringing them out from the land of Egypt: this *is* that night of the Lord to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations.

40. Habitatio autem filiorum Israel, qua habitaverunt in Ægypto, triginta fuerunt anni et quadringenti anni.

41. Factumque est a fine triginta et quadringentorum annorum, ipsa eadem die egressi sunt omnes exercitus Jehovæ e terra Ægypti.

42. Nox observabilis (*Heb.* observantiarum, vel custodiarum) hæc est Jehovæ, qua eduxit eos e terra Ægypti: nox *inquam* hæc observanda est Jehovæ apud omnes filios Israel per ætates suas.

50. Thus did all the children of Israel: as the Lord commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they.

51. And it came to pass the self-same day, *that* the Lord did bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their armies.

50. Et fecerunt omnes filii Israel sicuti præceperat Jehova Mosi et Aaron, sic fecerunt.

51. Et factum est ut ipsa eadem die educeret Jehova filios Israel e terra Ægypti per exercitus suos.

40. *Now the sojourning of the children of Israel.* The beginning of this period is not reckoned from the coming down of Jacob, for it is very clear from other passages, that, from the time that Jacob entered into Egypt to the Exodus, not more than 230 years at most had passed. [1]The Jews generally only reckon 210; but Moses includes also the period during which Abraham and his children were not in possession of the promised land. The meaning therefore is, that from the time that the inheritance of the land of Canaan was given to Abraham, the promise was suspended for 400 years before his posterity enjoyed their right. For Paul also

[1] This sentence is omitted in the French. The Latin is, "Hebræi communiter tantum decem recensent." A reference, however, to R. Sal. Jarchi explains it, "you will find, (he says,) that from the arrival of the Israelites in Egypt to the time of their departure, was 210 years."—*In loco.* Compare the LXX.

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thus explains this difficulty, (Gal. iii.,) where he says, that God had confirmed his covenant with Abraham 430 years before the law was promulged. Moses, therefore, dates the commencement of this period from the sojourning of Abraham, when he was still the lord of the land of Canaan by the just title of donation. With respect to the omission of the thirty years in the 15th chapter of Genesis, in this there is no contradiction, because the land had already been promised to Abraham some years previously, though, so far from obtaining dominion over it, he had scarcely been permitted to occupy it as "a stranger." Therefore God apprizes him, that 400 years still remained before he would put his descendants into possession of it; and, consequently, that the little time which had elapsed was not sufficient for the trial of his patience, but that both for himself and for his posterity there was need of extraordinary endurance, lest they should faint under the weariness of the long delay. Moreover, there is no departure from the usual manner of speaking, in His not exactly reckoning the number of years. More than 400 years, some twenty, or thereabouts, indeed, remained; but, since God had no other object than to exhort His people to patience, He does not accurately compute or define the exact number of years, because it was sufficient to put before them 400 years in a round sum. In the same way, it is added in the next verse, "at the end of 430 years," viz., from the time that Abraham had begun to be the legitimate lord of the land; for Moses wished to shew, that although God had long delayed the fulfilment of His promise, still His truth and faithfulness were certainly proved, not only because He had precisely performed what He had promised, but because He had observed the fore-appointed time. He calls the people, weak as they were, by an honourable title, "the hosts of the Lord," both to enforce again the power of God's blessing, and to give due honour to His grace in ruling and marshalling so confused a band. Although soldiers may be accustomed to obedience, and have learnt from exercise to keep their ranks; although they may have generals, commandants, and captains, and banners also under which to range themselves, still it is a very difficult thing to

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march an army of 20,000, or 30,000 men by night without confusion, and in good order; how great a miracle was it, then, for 600,000 men, with women and children, much baggage, herds, and flocks, and other encumbrances, to pass by night through the midst of enemies, and all to escape safely without a single exception! To the same effect, Moses repeats in the last verse of this chapter, that "the Lord did bring the children of Israel out—by their armies," as much as to say, that there was no confusion in that immense multitude; since God performed the part of an incomparable Leader in His marvellous power.

42. *It is a night to be much observed.* He shews that the Israelites have good cause for sacrificing to God with a solemn ceremony year by year for ever, and for celebrating the memory of that night; and that the Passover was instituted in token of their gratitude. But this admonition was very useful, in order that the Israelites should retain the legitimate use of this solemn feast-day, and that it might not grow into a mere cold ceremony, as is often the case; but that rather they might profitably, and to the advancement of their piety, exercise themselves in this emblem of their redemption. At the same time, he teaches that this so inestimable a benefit was not to be celebrated in one, or two, or three generations, but that as long as the people should remain it was worthy of eternal remembrance, and that it might never be forgotten, the Passover was to be sacredly observed.

Moreover we must remark, that the generations of the ancient people were brought to an end by the coming of Christ; because the shadows of the Law ceased when the state of the Church was renewed, and the Gentiles were gathered into the same body.

50. *Thus did all the children of Israel.* This chiefly refers to the slaying of the Paschal lamb with its adjuncts, although I do not deny that allusion is also made to the other circumstances attending their sudden departure. But it is not so much their promptitude and alacrity which are praised, as the wondrous power of God in fashioning their hearts, and directing their hands, so that, in the darkness

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of the night, amidst the greatest disturbances, in precipitate haste, with nothing well prepared, they were so active and dexterous. Meanwhile, Moses concludes, from the obedience of the people, that nothing was done without the command and guidance of God; from whence it is more clearly manifest that He was the sole author of their deliverance.

CHAPTER THIRTEENTH.

17. And it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God led them not *through* the way of the land of the Philistines, although that *was* near; for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt:

18. But God led the people about, *through* the way of the wilderness of the Red sea. And the children of Israel went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt.

19. And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him: for he had straitly sworn the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you; and ye shall carry up my bones away hence with you.

20. And they took their journey from Succoth, and encamped in Etham, in the edge of the wilderness.

21. And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light, to go by day and night.

22. He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, *from* before the people.

17. Factum est autem quum emitteret Pharao populum, ut non duceret eos Deus per viam terræ Philistim, quia propinqua erat. Nam dixit Deus, Ne forte pœniteat populum quum viderint prælium et revertantur in Ægyptum.

18. Circunduxit ergo Deus populum per viam deserti, per Mare Rubrum: et dispositi ascenderunt filii Israel e terra Ægypti.

19. Et tulit Moses ossa Joseph secum. Adjurando enim adjuraverat filios Israel, dicendo, Visitando visitabit vos Deus, et tolletis ossa mea hinc vobiscum.

20. Itaque profecti sunt e Suchoth, et castrametati sunt in Ethan, in extremitate deserti.

21. Jehova autem præcedebat eos interdiu in columna nubis, ut deduceret eos per viam; noctu vero in columna ignis, ut luceret eis, ut ambularent die et noctu.

22. Non abstulit columnam nubis interdiu, neque columnam ignis noctu a facie populi.

17. *And it came to pass when Pharaoh.* Moses here assigns the reason why God did not immediately lead His people by the more direct way into the land of Canaan, which would have been just as easy to Him, but preferred to bring them round through the desert, by a long and difficult and dangerous journey; viz., lest, if perhaps they had

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met with enemies to contend against, a ready means of return would have encouraged them to go back into Egypt. We know how great was the supineness and cowardice of this people, as soon as any difficulty presented itself; and how quick they were to revolt from the divine government, as often as a heavier burden than they liked was imposed upon them. We know how often they repented of having followed God as their leader, and thus were prepared to throw away by their ingratitude the grace offered to them. When, therefore, they were powerless in the use of arms, and were altogether without experience of military tactics, with what courage would they have engaged with an enemy, if any should have advanced against them within a few days of their coming out? Assuredly they would not have borne up against a single assault, but would have been willing rather to submit themselves to the Egyptians, with humble supplications for forgiveness. Lest, then, any desire of return should steal over their hearts, God was willing to set up a barrier behind them in the difficulty of the journey. Besides, if in their departure from Egypt they had immediately encountered the inhabitants of the land of Canaan in war, greater troubles would have awaited them; for the Egyptians would by no means let them alone, but, being aided by the subsidies and forces of so many peoples, would have endeavoured to avenge themselves, and, having entered into alliances on every side, would have hemmed in the unhappy Israelites. Wherefore, God provided excellently for them, by leading them through inaccessible paths, and by their very weariness shutting the door against their ever desiring to return into Egypt; while afterwards He gradually restored their confidence, before they came to fight, and had to sustain the attacks of their enemies. I admit, indeed, that God might have otherwise obviated all these evils; but since He is often wont to deal with His people on human principles, He chose to adopt the method which was most suited to their infirmity. Moses now commends this His admirable design, in order that we may know that nothing was omitted by Him which was for the safety and advantage of His people. For this "God said," which he mentions, re-

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fers to His providence; as much as to say, that the easier and more ordinary passage was not undesignedly rejected, but that because God knew it to be more expedient, He thus advisedly obviated the temptation.

18. *The children of Israel went up harnessed.* The word חמשים,[1] *chemishim*, is derived from "Five," from whence some have explained it, that they were furnished with five kinds of arms, but this is too absurd. The Hebrews, because they could conjecture nothing better or more probable, almost with one consent would understand it, that they were armed under the fifth rib. But whence were there so many military corselets ready for the Israelites? But I reject so forced and improbable a meaning, and doubt not that the word is one of number; as though Moses had said, that they went out in ranks of five; because, if each individual in so great a multitude had tried to advance, they would have been in each other's way. I have therefore thought fit to translate it "*dispositi*," (in ranks.) The idea of the Greeks about "the fifth generation," is very foreign to the present narrative. But in the sense I have given it, there is nothing obscure or doubtful; for it readily appears that God's favour is celebrated also in this particular, because He led forth His people in order. For, although they came out confusedly and hastily, still He restrained them, as it were, under His banner, and in companies, lest any disturbance should occur.

19. *And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him.* Hence it appears, that even in their adversity the memory of their promised deliverance had never departed from the people, for had not the adjuration of Joseph been currently spoken of in common conversation, Moses would never have been able to imagine it; but he expressly states that he acted in obedience to the holy patriarch in carrying away his bones. It is, therefore, probable that they were so deposited, that

[1] חמשים. Fives. The Rabbinical notions here mentioned are thus briefly stated in *S. M.*, "Exponitur a Kimchi sic, Et accincti armis in quinta costa. Alii autem sic exponunt, Et accincti quinque armorum generibus." In speaking of what the Greeks had imagined, *C.* alludes to the LXX., who entirely depart from the Hebrew, by rendering this clause, πέμπτῃ δὲ γενεᾷ, κ. τ. λ. "And in the fifth generation, the children of Israel went up," &c.—*W.*

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the hope of the people might be kept alive by seeing daily the urn or coffer which contained them, as if the holy man even after death uplifted from his tomb a sign of their deliverance; for although by this symbolical act he cherished his own faith, when he desired that, though dead, he might enter on the possession of the promised land, yet there is no doubt that he had more regard to his brethren and the whole posterity of the holy race.[1] For, having known by experience their apathy and the weakness of their faith, he naturally feared lest in a longer lapse of time they should grow more and more indifferent, and at length should despise the promise, and give themselves up altogether to listlessness about it. And certainly it must have been this mistrust of them which urged him not to be contented with a simple injunction, but to bind their minds more strongly by an oath. In Acts vii. 16, Stephen seems to assert that the other eleven sons of Jacob were also buried in Sichem; and it may be probably conjectured, that they were led piously to emulate the example of their brother Joseph. Assuredly the faith of the departed Joseph, even in his dry bones, preached loudly to his descendants of the promised deliverance, lest they should grow careless from the long delay; and when at length the Israelites were led forth, the bones or ashes of the twelve Patriarchs were like so many standard-bearers, going before the several tribes to encourage their confidence. Wherefore the cowardice of the people was still more detestable, so often basely turning their backs upon their journey, when they had in sight so eminent a ground for confidence. The words of Joseph, which Moses reports, "God will surely visit you," &c., confirm the expression of the Apostle, (Heb. xi. 22,) that "by faith—he gave commandment concerning his bones," because he thus takes upon himself the character and office of their surety, to exhort his nation to embrace the promise. How far the silly superstition of the Papists in worshipping the relics of saints differs from this object we may gather from hence without difficulty, viz., that they studiously catch at every means whereby they may be withdrawn further from the word of God.

[1] D'Abraham.—*Fr.*

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21. *And the Lord went before them.* Moses here proclaims another of God's mercies, that, having redeemed His people, He was their constant leader and guide; as the Prophet also in the Psalms distinctly makes reference to both. (Ps. lxxvii. 15; and lxxviii. 14.) It was indeed a marvellous act of loving-kindness that, accommodating Himself to their ignorance, He familiarly presented Himself before their eyes. He might, indeed, have protected them in some other way from the heat of the sun, and directed them in the darkness of the night; but, in order that His power might be more manifest, He chose to add also His visible presence, to remove all room for doubt. But, although the words of Moses seem in some measure to include the Lord in the cloud, we must observe the sacramental mode of speaking, wherein God transfers His name to visible figures; not to affix to them His essence, or to circumscribe His infinity, but only to shew that He does not deceitfully expose the signs of His presence to men's eyes, but that the exhibition of the thing signified is at the same time truly conjoined with them. Therefore, although Moses states that God was in the cloud and in the pillar of fire, yet does he not wish to draw Him down from heaven, nor to subject His infinite glory to visible signs, with which His truth may consist without His local presence.[1] But execrable is the mad notion of Servetus, who pretended that this cloud was uncreated, as though it were the Deity of Christ, for he substituted this One Person for the Three, as if there had then been a corporeal Deity, which he calls the "figurative Son," who was afterwards made flesh; not that He put on flesh, but because He appeared as man, compounded of three uncreated elements, and of the seed of David. But, soon after, Moses calls this same being an Angel, to which he now assigns the name of the eternal God. And with good reason, because our heavenly Father then led the Israelites only by the hand of His only-begotten Son. Now, since He is the eternal guardian of His Church, Christ is not less truly present with us now by His power than He was formerly manifest to the fathers. When, there-

[1] "Sans qu'il y soit requis une presence de lieu;" without a local presence being required.—*Fr.*

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fore, Isaiah prophesies His coming, he recounts amongst others this divine blessing, that "the Lord will create upon every dwelling-place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night,"—that there might be "a tabernacle for a shadow in the day-time from the heat, and for a place of refuge and for a covert from storm and from rain," (Is. iv. 5, 6;) as if he had said, that He would really and substantially fulfil what then was seen under a figurative symbol. And surely that promise,—"The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night," (Ps. cxxi. 6,) refers not to a single day, but to all ages. The statement of Moses, then, that "He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night," is a blessing which God extends to us, as well as to them, except only the visible symbol, which was temporary, on account of the infirmity of the people. As to his saying that God always appeared to them, that they might march by night as well as by day, he does not mean that they went on continually without any rest, since he had just before mentioned that their first station was in Succoth, from whence they encamped in Etham, but merely informs us that the flow of God's grace was continual, since the token of His favour and protection shone forth no less amidst the darkness of the night than at mid-day itself.

CHAPTER FOURTEENTH.

1. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

2. Speak unto the children of Israel, that they turn and encamp before Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, over against Baal-zephon: before it shall ye encamp by the sea.

3. For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, They *are* entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in.

4. And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, that he shall follow after them; and I will be honoured upon Pha-

1. Et loquutus est Jehova ad Mosen, dicendo.

2. Loquere ad filios Israel, ut redeant, et maneant e regione Pihahiroth inter Migdol et inter mare, e regione Baalsephon, contra ipsum castrametentur juxta mare.

3. Dicet enim Pharao de filiis Israel, Irretiti sunt in terra: conclusit illos desertum.

4. Et roborabo cor Pharaonis, ut persequatur eos: et glorificabor in Pharaone, et in universo exercitu

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raoh, and upon all his host; that the Egyptians may know that I *am* the Lord. And they did so.

5. And it was told the king of Egypt that the people fled: and the heart of Pharaoh and of his servants was turned against the people, and they said, Why have we done this, that we have let Israel go from serving us?

6. And he made ready his chariot, and took his people with him.

7. And he took six hundred chosen chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt, and captains over every one of them.

8. And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued after the children of Israel: and the children of Israel went out with an high hand.

9. But the Egyptians pursued after them, (all the horses *and* chariots of Pharaoh, and his horsemen, and his army,) and overtook them encamping by the sea, beside Pihahiroth, before Baal-zephon.

ejus: scientque Ægyptii quod ego Jehova. Et fecerunt sic.

5. Nuntiatum est autem regi Ægypti quod fugisset populus: Et versum est cor Pharaonis et servorum ejus in populum, et dixerunt, Cur hoc fecimus ut dimitteremus Israel, ne serviret nobis?

6. Et aptato curru suo populum assumpsit secum.

7. Tulit itaque sexcentos currus electos, omnes currus Ægypti, et duces super quenque illorum.

8. Et roboravit Jehova cor Pharaonis regis Ægypti, et persequutus est filios Israel. Filii autem Israel egressi erant in manu excelsa.

9. Et persequuti sunt Ægyptii illos, apprehenderuntque eos quum castra haberent juxta mare, omnis equitatus curruum Pharaonis, et equites ejus, et exercitus ejus, juxta Pihahiroth, e regione Baalsephon.

1. *And the Lord spake unto Moses.* God, by closing up all the ways by which the Israelites might have escaped, now opens a course for His wonderful power, and by bringing them for one moment to despair, provided for the safety of His Church through a long period of time. This final act, then, marvellously illustrated the grace of God, so that the people, however ungrateful and disaffected they might be, should still acknowledge God as their deliverer; besides, its consequence was, that the forces of Egypt not only being broken, but the whole nation being destroyed, or, at least, the flower of it extinguished, it brought no further trouble upon the people until they were established in the land of Canaan. If they had freely and peacefully gone forth, with the king and the people of Egypt quiet, the former miracles would not have sufficiently availed to testify their redemption; but when, being everywhere shut in, they see nothing but death before them, whilst the sea suddenly and unexpectedly affords them a passage, and overwhelms their enemies pressing on them from behind, they are obliged to con-

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fess that they were not only saved from death but from the deepest abysses by the hand of God. But it appears that, when they were commanded by Moses to cast themselves, and, as it were, to ingulf themselves in the narrow passage, of which mention is made, they were astonished by the miracles, and like them that dream, since they obeyed without hesitation, although the very aspect of the place must have inspired them with horror. For, if they had apprehended danger, their readiness to obey would not have been so great, as we shall presently see. Wherefore it was the intention of Moses not so much to praise them, as the providence of God. For it is plain, that unless they had been amazed by the miracles, of which they had seen so many, they scarcely could have been induced willingly to throw themselves into defiles from whence there was no retreat. From the word מגדל, *migdol*, we may conjecture that a fortress was built on the rock to prevent access to it. I do not quite understand the meaning of החירת,[1] *hachiroth*, nor do I see why the Greeks should have translated it "the mouth of the valley;" yet from the word signifying "a mouth," it may be probably conjectured that it was contracted by piles. Because the word חור, *chor*, signifies a cave or hole, I know not whether the place might not have obtained its name, as the mouth of the holes or caverns; for the letter ו, *vau*, is often converted into י, *yod*, and the change of the gender in the plural number is frequent with the Hebrews. Or perhaps some may think it more likely, that though it was written החירות, *hachiroth*, the letter ת crept in in place of ה from its similarity. If we so take it, the feminine gender is put for the masculine, and it will be "the mouth of the mountains." But although we may be ignorant of the etymology of the second word, the word "mouth" makes it

[1] פיהחירת. *C.* has not borrowed anything from *S. M.* here. In Dr. Wilson's "Lands of the Bible," vol. i. chap. 5, he has observed that if Pi-hahiroth is to be supposed to be a name given to the place, in the Hebrew tongue, it is well fitted to describe *the mouth of the defiles*, on emerging from which, the traveller comes in sight of the Red Sea, and enters on ground shut in between mountain barriers and that sea; but he also mentions that Gesenius has said, on the authority of Tablonski, that these syllables form the Egyptian name for a place where sedges grow.—*W.*

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certain that the defile was inclosed by rocks, and of narrow access. Although, if I may tender my own judgment in a doubtful matter, I rather consider that it is derived from the word חרת, *charath*, which means to engrave, or to furrow, because the rocks were cut as by a mallet. But on the opposite side, the place was surrounded by the sea, as though the Israelites had been cast into a sepulchre.

3. *For Pharaoh will say.* God here explains to Moses His design; although, in His engagements with Pharaoh, He had so often gained glorious victories, that the last act still remained to overwhelm him and his army in the sea. He says that Pharaoh, then, will be caught in this snare, so as to rush upon his destruction. For, if the people had come into the land of Canaan by a direct course, they could not have been so readily pursued; therefore God, for the sake of magnifying His glory, set a bait to catch the tyrant, just as fish are hooked. The word here used נבכים,[1] *nebukim*, some render "perplexed," others "entangled;" but it may be well explained, that they were to be "confounded in the land," because they would find no way of egress; as being on all sides hemmed in in the narrow passage, with the sea behind them. And where He speaks of the intentions of Pharaoh, He does not, as men do, conceive a mere probability, but He declares the secret mind of the tyrant, as of a thing which He well knew, since it is His attribute to discern our hearts. Afterwards He goes still further; for He signifies not only that He foresaw what would happen, but again repeats what we have so often observed before, that He would harden Pharaoh's heart, that he should follow after the people. Whence it follows, that all this was directed by His will and guidance. But He did not testify this to Moses only in private, but would have them all previously admonished, lest, being terrified by the sudden assault of their enemies, they should despair of safety. But this admonition was less useful to them than it should have been; because, being soon after surprised, they are not less alarmed than

[1] נבכים. Calvin adopts the explanation given by *S. M.*, on the authority of Aben-Ezra, "Passivum est a verbo בוך, quod significat animo perplexum esse, ut nescias quo te vertas."—*W.*

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as if they had been brought into danger through the error of God and the ignorance of Moses.

5. *And it was told the king.* Moses does not simply mean, that the king then first heard of the flight of the people, which had been anything but secret; but that the circumstances were reported to him, which stirred him up to make an attack upon them. When, then, he hears that the people fled in haste, he thinks that they may be retained by the slightest obstacle. Nor is he alone influenced by this foolish thought, but all his courtiers blame their own inertness for letting the people go. They inquire among themselves, Why they have let the children of Israel depart? as if they had not endeavoured in every way to prevent their free exit—as if their pertinacity had not been ten times divinely overcome—as if God had not at length torn the people from them, in spite of their reluctance. But this is the stupidity of the wicked, that they only dread God's present hand, and immediately forget all that they have seen. They were worn out by the fierce and dreadful punishments; but now, as if nothing had happened, they discuss why they had not resisted God even to the end, when he had compelled them to submit with extreme reluctance, after they had ten times found out that they struggled against Him in vain. But such is the pride by which the reprobate must be blinded, that they may be driven onwards to their own destruction, while they are persuaded that there is nothing difficult to them, and fight against God.

6. *And he made ready his chariot.* Moses briefly describes the warlike preparation of Pharaoh, not only to magnify the greatness of God's power in delivering the people, but also to shew with what violent and obstinate audacity the wicked go forwards, when they give way to their depraved and criminal lusts. Just now the Egyptians were almost frightened to death, and cried out that all was over with them; scarcely has a day passed, when they collect a powerful army as if their forces were uninjured. If any object that 600 chariots, and even many more, although filled with armed men, were insufficient to conquer 600,000 men: I reply, that, since they knew that the battle would be with an unwarlike

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multitude, amongst which, too, women and children were mingled, they relied on this consideration, and hoped that they would have no difficulty in routing this enormous number, since it was both inexperienced and undisciplined. Nor would their hope have been disappointed, had not God been against them. But the event proved how truly Solomon says, "There is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against the Lord," (Prov. xxi. 30;) and how justly Isaiah defies the enemies of the Church: "Associate yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces; gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces; take counsel together, and it shall come to nought; speak the word, and it shall not stand." (Is. viii. 9, 10.) For this presumption brings the wicked to nought; and, whilst they rush forward with unbridled violence, they conceive not that God has a secret bridle to restrain their lusts.

8. *And the children of Israel went out.*[1] Moses indirectly reproves their too great security, which had freed them altogether from care and fear; and whence even the desire of calling on God had grown cold in them, as security always produces drowsiness and an idle spirit. Hence it came to pass, that this great danger, which they had not expected, produced the greater fear. But, on the other hand, Moses exalts God's grace, because He so opportunely and so critically came to the help of the wretched Israelites exulting in their foolish joy; for otherwise, being suddenly overtaken, they would have fallen at once into confusion at the first shout of the enemy. Thus are we admonished by this example, that, while we are safe under God's protection, the dangers, which might happen, are to be apprehended, not that we may be anxious and alarmed, but that we may humbly repose under His wings, and not be uplifted with inconsiderate joy. In the next verse Moses briefly relates, how formidable a sight presented itself to the Israelites, when they saw themselves shut in on one part by the sea, ingulfed, as it were, on both sides by the jaws of the defile, and the army of Pharaoh at the same time pressing upon them. He expressly mentions the strength of this army, in

[1] Exierant.—*Dathe.*

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order that the glory of the aid divinely afforded them might more fully appear from the opposition.

10. And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians marched after them; and they were sore afraid: and the children of Israel cried out unto the Lord.

10. Quumque applicuisset Pharao, levaverunt filii Israel oculos suos, et ecce, Ægyptii iter faciebant post eos. Itaque timuerunt valde, et clamaverunt filii Israel ad Jehovam.

11. And they said unto Moses, Because *there were* no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt?

11. Et dixerunt ad Mosen, Nunquid (*vel*, An quia) quia non erant sepulchra in Ægypto, tulisti nos ut moreremur in deserto? Quare sic fecisti nobis, ut educeres nos ex Ægypto?

12. *Is* not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? For *it had been* better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness.

12. Nonne hoc est verbum quod diximus tibi in Ægypto, dicentes, Dimitte nos, ut serviamus Ægyptiis. Melius enim nobis erat servire Ægyptiis quam mori in deserto.

13. And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will shew to you to-day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen today, ye shall see them again no more for ever.

13. Et dixit Moses ad populum, Ne timueritis: state et videte salutem Jehovæ quam hodie faciet vobis. Nam quos vidistis Ægyptios hodie, non estis visuri post hac in sæculum.

14. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.

14. Jehova pugnabit pro vobis, et vos quiescetis.

15. And the Lord said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto me? speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward:

15. Dixerat autem Jehova ad Mosen, Quid clamas ad me? Alloquere filios Israel ut proficiscantur.

16. But lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it; and the children of Israel shall go on dry *ground* through the midst of the sea.

16. Tu vero attolle baculum tuum, et extende manum tuam super mare, et scinde illud, et ingrediantur filii Israel per medium maris in arida.

17. And I, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them: and I will get me honour upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen.

17. Et ecce, ego roborabo cor Ægyptiorum, ut sequantur illos, glorificaborque in Pharaone, et in toto exercitu ejus, in curribus ejus, et in equitibus ejus.

18. And the Egyptians shall know that I *am* the Lord, when I have gotten me honour upon Pharaoh, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen.

18. Et scient Ægyptii quod ego Jehova, quum glorificatus fuero in Pharaone, in quadrigis ejus, et in equitibus.

10. *And when Pharaoh drew nigh.* Moses implies that the alarm was greater from its suddenness, because no messenger had preceded, so that a very short time indeed was

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given them for preparation. There was, then, just ground for fear even in the bravest hearts, unless there had been something very extraordinary about them. But they sinned doubly; because both the hope of divine assistance had abandoned their hearts together with the recollection of God's mercies; and they advanced to such an extent of ingratitude as to revolt insolently against God and Moses. Although there is an appearance of two contrary facts being here reported, viz., that they cried out unto the Lord, and mutinied against His minister; yet we may easily gather that this cry neither arose from faith nor from serious and well-ordered affections, but that it was extorted by a confused impulse; since the natural sense impels all men, in their adversity, promiscuously to offer their prayers to God, although they neither embrace His mercy nor rely on His power. Thus David, in Psalm cvii., says that all the distressed have recourse to God when any trouble oppresses them; because God, by the leadings of nature and by secret instinct, draws them to Him in their danger, in order that the most careless and most profane may be rendered more inexcusable. Yet in this way do they not render due honour to God, although by the utterance of their mouths they ask for safety from Him. It is, then, little to be wondered at, that the Israelites being reduced to such sore anxiety should have offered prayers and vows accompanied with God's name; especially since He had recently manifested Himself to them in so many miracles, and they always had in sight the cloud, or the pillar of fire. But their insane cries against Moses were plain proof that, as in amazement, they had thoughtlessly hastened to call upon the name of God. For the exposition[1] is unreasonable which some give, that certain of them piously prayed to God, whilst others of the multitude wickedly mutinied against Moses; because these two statements are made in conjunction, and cannot be referred to different persons.

11. *Because there were no graves.* This[2] is the more proper sense; for the double negative is put for a single one.

[1] The interpretation only noticed to be set aside is found in *S. M.*—*W.*
[2] This sentence is omitted in the French.

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It is a bitter and biting taunt; for, not contented with preferring the graves of Egypt to the death which they feared, they scoffingly inquire how he could have thought of bringing them into the wilderness, as if the land of Egypt was not large enough to bury them in. But God had openly and clearly proved Himself to be the leader of their departing; and, again, it was basely insensible of them to forget that they were not long since like dead men, and had been miraculously brought out of the grave. Their madness is wilder still, when they daringly call to remembrance the impious blasphemies which should have been a matter of shame and detestation to themselves. For how sad was their ingratitude in rejecting the proffered favour of deliverance, and in shutting the door against the advances of God, in order that they might rot in their misery! True, that God had pardoned this great depravity; but it was their part unceasingly to mourn, and to be as it were overwhelmed with shame, that their crime might be blotted out before God's judgment-seat. But now, as if God and Moses were accountable to them, they boastfully and petulantly reproach them for not believing them, when they would have prudently prevented the evil. Hence are we taught how far men's passions will carry them, when fear has extinguished their hopes, and they wait not patiently for God's aid.

13. *And Moses said unto the people.* Although with his characteristic kindness Moses courteously exhorts them to be of good hope, yet it is not probable that he passed over in silence those wicked cries with which he saw that God was atrociously assailed. I conceive, then, that he discharged the duty of a faithful teacher by freely chastising their insolence, which was intolerable; and since he spoke under the inspiration of the preventing Spirit of God, there is no doubt but that God himself severely reproved their blasphemies, lest, by indulgence, they should grow worse. But Moses omits the reproof, and only shews that God's loving-kindness went beyond the execrable impiety of the people, giving them consolation to assuage their grief and to calm their troubled hearts. Moreover, by bidding them not to fear,

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and "to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord," he implies that, as long as fear has possession of our minds, they are blinded, and confounded in their stupidity so as not to receive the help of God. By the expression, "stand still," he means "keep quiet;" as much as to say, that there was no occasion for any one to move a finger, because God alone would preserve them, though they were quiet and unmoved; and this he confirms in the next verse, where God promises to conquer for them whilst they hold their peace. But, in my opinion, it is not that he exhorts them to be quiet; but intimates that in God alone there would be strength enough to prevail, although they might be torpid like men entranced. Now the Israelites, when, though preserved by God's hand, they reject as much as possible His proffered grace, are an example to us how many repeated salvations are necessary for us, in order that God may bring us to perfect salvation; because, by our ingratitude, we nullify whatever He has given us, and thus should wilfully perish, if God did not correct our apathy by the power of His Spirit.

15. *And the Lord*[1] *said.* I have used the *præter-pluperfect* tense for the sake of avoiding ambiguity; for the reason is here given why Moses so confidently reproved the hesitation of the people, and promised that they should be safe under the present help of God; viz., because he had already been assured by divine revelation that God was willing to aid His people, and had in readiness a new means for their preservation. For he could not have been the proclaimer and witness of their safety if he had not received the promise. Therefore he relieves his confidence from the imputation of rashness, since he advanced nothing which he had not already heard from the mouth of God himself. These words, "Wherefore criest thou unto me?" some interpreters extend to the whole people, whose representative Moses was; but this sense is too far-fetched, and I have recently observed, that the prayers of the people were by no means directed to God. I doubt not, therefore, that the holy man had prayed apart in the insurrection of the people. Nor is this pious duty disapproved of in the passage; but

[1] Had said.—*Lat.*

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God rather shews that he had not spent his labour in vain, nor poured forth his words into the air. The sense, then, is, "Weary not yourself by crying any more; the event will prove that you are heard. Lift up your rod, then, whereby you may divide the sea, so that the children of Israel may go dry shod through the midst of it." This passage shews that they are guilty of rashness who promise anything either to themselves or others, as to particular blessings, without the special testimony of God.

17. *I will harden.* God once more affirms, for the greater exaltation of His own power, that He will harden the Egyptians, so that, as if devoted to destruction, they may cast themselves into the midst of the sea; which they certainly would never have done, unless He had guided their hearts by his secret influence; because it could not have escaped them that a passage for the Israelites was opened by His special gift, from whence they might gather that the elements were at war with them. Therefore they would never have dared to enter the sea, which they saw to be armed against them, unless they had been blinded by God. Whence it appears how unworthy is the imagination of those who pretend that there was but a bare permission here, where God would make His power conspicuous. It would have been enough that after the Israelites had passed over to the opposite shore the sea should have returned to its place and prevented the Egyptians from following; but God was willing, by a double miracle, to consult for the security of His people for a long time to come. And this, indeed, came to pass; for the flower of the whole nation being destroyed, the Egyptians were unable to recruit their army; especially when the heir to the throne had already been slain, and the king himself was now taken away. On this account it is said, that the Egyptians should know that the God of Israel was the Lord; because in this last act they found that the power of rebellion was altogether taken from them.

19. And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed, and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them.

19. Profectus est itaque angelus Dei qui præcedebat castra Israel: cœpitque ire a tergo ipsorum, et columna nubis quæ præcedebat eos, fuit illis a tergo.

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20. And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness *to them*, but it gave light by night *to these:* so that the one came not near the other all the night.

20. Ac ingressus est inter castra Ægyptiorum et inter castra Israel. Et fuit nubes et caligo: et illuminavit noctem, nec appropinquavit alter alteri tota nocte.

21. And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the Lord caused the sea to go *back* by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry *land*, and the waters were divided.

21. Porro extendit Moses manum suam super mare: et Jehova fecit mare abire per ventum orientalem vehementem tota nocte; posuitque mare in siccitatem, quia divisæ erant aquæ.

22. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry *ground:* and the waters *were* a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.

22. Tunc ingressi sunt filii Israel in medium maris in sicco: et aquæ illis erant quasi murus a dextra et sinistra eorum.

23. And the Egyptians pursued, and went in after them to the midst of the sea, *even* all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen.

23. Et insequuti sunt Ægyptii, et venerunt post illos totus equitatus Pharaonis, currus ejus, et equites ad medium maris.

24. And it came to pass, that, in the morning watch the Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians.

24. Et factum est custodia matutina ut respiceret Jehova ad castra Ægyptiorum in columna ignis et nube: et turbavit castra Ægyptiorum.

25. And took off their chariot-wheels, that they drave them heavily: so that the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the Lord fighteth for them against the Egyptians.

25. Et abstulit rotas curruum ejus, et violenter vexit eum. Unde dixit Ægyptius, Fugiam a facie Israel: quia Jehova pugnat pro eis contra Ægyptios.

19. *And the angel of God.* A sudden change which occurred to prevent a battle is here described; for the angel, who used to go before the Israelites to shew the way, turned to the other side, that he might be interposed between the two camps; and this, in two respects, because the pillar of fire shone upon the Israelites to dissipate the darkness of the night, whilst thick darkness held the Egyptians as it were in captivity, so that they were unable to proceed further. Thus did God both prevent them from advancing, and also held out a torch for His people all night to light them on their way. He, who has been called "Jehovah" hitherto, is now designated by Moses "the Angel;" not only because the angels who represent God often borrow His name, but because this Leader of the people was God's only-begotten Son, who afterwards was manifested in the flesh, as

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I have shewn upon the authority of Paul. (1 Cor. x. 4.) It may be remarked, also, that He is said to have moved here and there, as He shewed some token of His power and assistance. Most clearly, too, does it appear, that the glory of God, whilst it enlightens the faithful, overshadows the unbelievers, on the other hand, with darkness. No wonder, then, if now-a-days the brightness of the Gospel should blind the reprobate. But we should ask of God to make us able to behold His glory.

21. *And Moses stretched out.* We have already said that the passage was free and convenient for the Israelites by night, since the pillar of fire replenished their side with light: and certainly so great a multitude could not reach the opposite shore in an hour or two. The Israelites then passed over from evening even till dawn; and then the Egyptians having discovered that they were gone, hastened to follow that they might fall upon their rear. Now, though Moses uses no ornaments of language in celebrating this miracle, yet the bare recital ought to be sufficient; and, therefore, is more emphatic to awaken our admiration than any rhetorical colouring and magnificent eloquence. For who would desire sounding exclamations, in order to be ravished to the highest admiration of the divine power, when he is told simply and in a few words that the sea was divided by the rod of Moses; that space enough for the passage of the people was dry; that the mighty mass of waters stood like solid rocks on either side? Designedly, then, has he set the whole matter before our eyes bare of all verbal splendour; although it will both be celebrated soon after, in accordance with its dignity, in the Canticle, and is everywhere more splendidly magnified by the Prophets and in the Psalms. In this passage let us learn, just as if Moses were leading us to the actual circumstance, to fix our eyes on the prospect of God's inestimable power, which cannot be sufficiently expressed by any number or force of words. But Moses is very careful not to arrogate more than enough for himself, so as to detract from the praise of God. He had been before commanded to divide the sea with his uplifted rod; he now changes the form of expression, viz., that the waters went back by the command

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of God. Thus, content with the character of a minister, he makes God alone, as was fit, the author of the miracle. But although it was competent for God to dispel the waters without any motion of the air, yet, that He might shew that all nature was obedient to Him, and governed at His will, He was pleased to raise the strong east wind. Meanwhile it is to be remembered, that the sea could not be dried by any wind, however strong, unless it had been effected by the secret power of the Spirit, beyond the ordinary operation of nature. On which point see my previous annotations on chap. x. 13 and 19.

24. *And it came to pass, that, in the morning-watch.* In the morning the angel began to look upon the Egyptians, not that they had escaped his sight before; but for the purpose of destroying them by sudden submersion, though he had seemed previously to forget them, when hidden by the cloud.[1] And first, He opened their eyes, that too late they might see whither their mad impetuosity had brought them; and also that they might perceive how they were contending not with man only, but with God; and that thus, being overwhelmed with sudden astonishment, they might not be able to escape to the shore in time; for they were on this account overtaken in the midst of the sea, because terror had thrown them into utter confusion, when they perceived that God was against them. They saw that there was no greater hope of safety than to retreat, because God fought for Israel; but being in complete disorder, they could make no way, and, whilst they rather proved hinderances to each other, the sea ingulfed them all.

26. And the Lord said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen.

27. And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared, and the Egyptians fled against it; and the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea.

26. Et ait Jehova ad Mosen, Extende manum tuam super mare, ut revertantur aquæ super Ægyptum, super currus ejus et equites ejus.

27. Et extendit Moses manum suam super mare, et reversum est mare quum mane illuxisset, secundum vim suam: fugeruntque Ægyptii ad occursum ejus. Et impulit Jehova Ægyptios in medium maris.

[1] La nuit.—*Fr.*

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28. And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, *and* all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them: there remained not so much as one of them.

29. But the children of Israel walked upon dry *land* in the midst of the sea; and the waters *were* a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.

30. Thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea-shore.

31. And Israel saw that great work which the Lord did upon the Egyptians: and the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and his servant Moses.

28. Et redeuntes aquæ operuerunt quadrigas et equites in toto exercitu Pharaonis, qui ingressi erant post illos in mare: nec unus fuit ex ipsis residuus.

29. Filii autem Israel ambulaverunt in sicco per medium maris: et aquæ erant illis quasi murus a dextra eorum et a sinistra eorum.

30. Liberavit ergo Jehova in die illa Israelem a manu Ægyptii. Et vidit Israel Ægyptium mortuum super littus maris.

31. Et vidit Israel potentiam magnam quam fecit Jehova contra Ægyptios. Et timuit populus Jehovam, et crediderunt Jehovæ et Mosi servo ejus.

26. *And the Lord said unto Moses.* Moses here relates how the sea, in destroying the Egyptians, had no less obeyed God's command than when it lately afforded a passage for His people, for it was by the uplifting of the rod of Moses that the waters came again into their place, as they had been before gathered into heaps. The Egyptians now repented of their precipitate madness, and determined, as conquered by God's power, to leave the children of Israel, and to return home; but God, who willed their destruction, shut up the way of escape at this very crisis. But, that we may know how evident a miracle was here, Moses now adds the circumstance of time, for he says that the morning then appeared, so that the broad daylight might shew the whole transaction to the eyes of the spectators. The waters, indeed, were heaped up in the night; but the pillar of fire, which shone on the Egyptians, and pointed out their way, did not allow God's blessing to be hidden from them. The case of the Egyptians was otherwise: therefore it behoved that they should perish by day, and that the sun itself should render their destruction visible. This also tends to prove God's power, because, whilst they were endeavouring to fly, He openly urged them on, as if they were intentionally drowning themselves.

28. *And the waters returned.* In these two verses also

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Moses continues the same relation. It plainly appears from Josephus and Eusebius what silly tales Manetho[1] and others have invented about the Exodus of the people; for although Satan has attempted by their falsehoods to overshadow the truth of sacred history, so foolish and trifling are their accounts that they need not refutation. The time itself, which they indicate, sufficiently convicts them of ignorance. But God has admirably provided for our sakes, in choosing Moses His servant, who was the minister of their deliverance, to be also the witness and historian of it; and this, too, amongst those who had seen all with their own eyes, and who, in their peculiar frowardness, would never have suffered one, who was so severe a reprover of them, to make any false statements of fact. Since, then, his authority is sure and unquestionable, let us only observe what his method was, viz., briefly to relate in this place how there was not one left of Pharaoh's mighty army; that the Israelites all to a man passed over in safety and dry-shod; that, by the rod of Moses, the nature of the waters was changed, so that they stood like solid walls; that by the same rod they were afterwards made liquid, so as suddenly to overwhelm the Egyptians. This enumeration plainly shews an extraordinary work of God to have been here, for as to the trifling of certain profane writers[2] about the ebb and flow of the Arabian

[1] Les ennemis de Dieu.—*Fr.*

[2] "Artapanus, an ancient heathen historian, informs us that this was what the more ignorant Menophites, who lived at a great distance, pretended, though he confesses that the more learned Heliopolitans, who lived much nearer, owned the destruction of the Egyptians and the deliverance of the Israelites to have been miraculous."—*Whiston's Josephus, Notes on Jew. Ant.*, ii. 16. "At an early period, historians (particularly in Egypt) hostile to the Jews, asserted that Moses, well acquainted with the tides of the Red Sea, took advantage of the ebb, and passed over his army, while the incautious Egyptians, attempting to follow, were surprised by the flood and perished. Yet, after every concession, it seems quite evident that, without one particular wind, the ebb-tide, even in the narrowest part of the channel, could not be kept back long enough to allow a number of people to cross in safety. We have thus the alternative of supposing that a man of the consummate prudence and sagacity, and the local knowledge attributed to Moses, altered, suspended, or at least did not hasten his march, and thus deliberately involved the people whom he had rescued at so much pains and risk, in the danger of being overtaken by the enemy, led back as slaves, or massacred, on the chance that an unusually strong wind would blow at a particular hour, for a given time, so as to keep back

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Gulf, it falls to nothing of itself. From these things, therefore, he at last justly infers, that the Israelites had seen the powerful hand of God then and there exerted.

31. *And Israel saw.* After he has said that the Israelites saw the dead bodies spread upon the sea-shore, he now adds that in this spectacle God's hand,[1] *i.e.*, His power, appeared, because there was no difficulty in distinguishing between God's wrath and His fatherly love, in preserving so miraculously an unwarlike multitude, and in destroying in the depths of the sea an army formidable on every account. Moses, therefore, does not unreasonably conclude here that the Divine power was conspicuous in the deliverance of the people. He afterwards adds, that, not without their profit, did the Israelites see God's hand; because they feared Him, and believed Him, and His servant Moses. "Fear" is here used for that reverence which kept the people in the way of duty, for they were not only affected by dread, but also attracted to devote themselves to God, whose goodness they had so sweetly and delightfully experienced. But although this pious feeling was not durable, at any rate with the greater number of them, it is still probable that it rooted itself in some few of them, because some seed ever remained, nor was the recollection of this blessing entirely destroyed. By the word "believed," I think that the principal part of fear is marked, and I understand it to be added *expositively*, as if it were said, "that they reverenced God, and testified this by faithfully embracing His doctrine and obediently submitting themselves to Moses." I understand it that they were all generally thus affected, because the recognition of God's hand bowed them to obedience, that they should be more tractable and docile, and more inclined to follow God. But this ardour soon passed away from the greater number of them, as (hypocrites[2]) are wont to be only influenced by what is visible and present; although I hold to what I have

the flood, then die away, and allow the tide to return at the precise instant when the Egyptians were in the middle of the passage."—*Milman's Hist. of the Jews*, b. ii. Dr. Kitto says that, in those regions, the blowing of an easterly wind would be in itself a miracle.

[1] So in margin, *A. V.*

[2] This word, added in the *Fr.*, seems necessary to complete the sense.

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just said, that, in some small number, the fear of God, which they had once conceived from a sense of His grace, still abode in vigour. Meanwhile, let us learn from this passage that God is never truly and duly worshipped without faith, because incredulity betrays gross contempt of Him; and although hypocrites boast of their heaping all kinds of honour upon God, still they inflict the greatest insult upon Him, by refusing to believe His revelations. But Moses, who had been chosen God's minister for governing the people, is not unreasonably here united with Him, for although God's majesty manifested itself by conspicuous signs, still Moses was the mediator, out of whose mouth God willed that His words should be heard, so that the holy man could not be despised without God's own authority being rejected. A profitable doctrine is gathered from hence, that whenever God propounds His word to us by men, those who faithfully deliver His commands must be as much attended to as if He himself openly descended from heaven. This recommendation of the ministry ought to be more than sufficient to refute their folly, who set at nought the outward preaching of the word. Let us, then, hold fast this principle, that only those obey God who receive the prophets sent from Him, because it is not lawful to put asunder what He has joined together. Christ has more clearly expressed this in the words,—"He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me." (Matt. x. 40.) But it is more than absurd, that the Pope, with his filthy clergy, should take this to himself, as if he was to be heard when he puts forward God's name; for (to pass over many other reasons which I could mention) it will be, first of all, necessary that he should prove himself to be God's servant, from whence I wish he was not so far removed. For here the obedience of the people is praised on no other grounds but because they "believed the Lord," and, together with Him, "His servant Moses."

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CHAPTER FIFTEENTH.

1. Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.

2. The Lord *is* my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he *is* my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him.

3. The Lord *is* a man of war: the Lord *is* his name.

4. Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea: his chosen captains also are drowned in the Red sea.

5. The depths have covered them: they sank into the bottom as a stone.

6. Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power: thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy.

7. And in the greatness of thine excellency thou hast overthrown them that rose up against thee: thou sentest forth thy wrath, *which* consumed them as stubble.

8. And with the blast of thy nostrils the waters were gathered together, the floods stood upright as an heap, *and* the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea.

9. The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; my lust shall be satisfied upon them: I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them.

10. Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them: they sank as lead in the mighty waters.

1. Tunc cecinit Moses et filii Israel canticum hoc Jehovæ, et dixerunt, Cantabo Jehovæ, quoniam se magnifice extulit (*Heb.*, magnificando magnificatus est): equum et ascensorem ejus projecit in mare.

2. Fortitudo mea et canticum Deus, et fuit mihi in salutem. Hic Deus meus et decorabo eum: Deus patris mei, et extollam eum.

3. Jehova vir bellicosus: Jehova nomen ejus.

4. Currus Pharaonis et exercitum ejus projecit in mare: et electi duces ejus demersi sunt in mari Suph.

5. Abyssi operuerunt eos: descenderunt in profunda, quasi lapis.

6. Dextera tua Jehova excelluit fortitudine, dextera tua Jehova fregit inimicum.

7. Et in magnitudine magnificentiæ tuæ subvertisti insurgentes contra te. Misisti furorem, consumpsit eos quasi stipulam.

8. Et per flatum narium tuarum coacervatæ sunt aquæ, steterunt fluenta sicuti acervus: coagulatæ sunt voragines in corde maris.

9. Dixerat hostis, Persequar, apprehendam, dividam spolia, implebitur illis anima mea, exseram gladium, perdet eos manus mea.

10. Flavisti vento tuo, operuit eos mare, demersi sunt quasi plumbum in aquis validis.

1. *Then sang Moses.* Moses introduced this song not only in testimony of his gratitude, but also in confirmation of the history; for the song which he dictated to the Israelites was not concerning an unknown event, but he brought them forward as eye-witnesses, that all ages might know that nothing thus far had been written which had not openly been declared by 600,000 men, besides their wives and children.

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Moses, therefore, set the example in accordance with his office, whilst the people, by singing with him, testified their approbation in a manner which admits of no contradiction. For to whom could they have lied, since they were each other's witnesses, and the song was listened to by no strangers? Moses seems to mark their confidence by the repetition in the Hebrew, they "spake, saying." On this account, too, their confession, pronounced by all their mouths, deserves more credit, because the greater part of them soon after yielded to ingratitude: from whence we gather that it was only on compulsion that they gave God glory. But, although Moses was the author of the song, yet he does not say "I will sing" in his own person, but prescribes to all what each individual ought heartily to do.

2. *The Lord is my strength.* In this expression they acknowledge that they have a sufficient defence in God; and afterwards they add, that His grace furnishes them with just ground for praise. The sum is, that they were strong in God, and had not conquered their enemies by their own bravery; and that, therefore, it is not lawful to glory save in God alone. But we must observe that the help of God is conjoined with His praise, because this is the end of all His benefits, that we should hold our salvation as received from Him, which is here mentioned in the third place, for to say that God had "become their salvation," was as much as to say that the people were saved by His grace. In the second clause there is an antithesis between the true God and all false ones; for there is much emphasis in the declaration, "he is my God," as by it Moses excludes all that multitude of gods which then were everywhere worshipped in the world. To the same effect he adds, "my father's God," thus distinguishing the faith of Abraham from all the superstitions of the Gentiles. The faithful then declare that it is safe for them to repose in this One God, and that His praises are worthy of celebration. Isaiah imitates this figure, chap. xxv. 9, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him." What follows in the next verse—"The Lord is a man of war," is to the same purpose, for although at first sight

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the phrase may seem a harsh one, still it is not without beauty: that God is armed in military attire, to contend with all the forces of His foes. Therefore, says Moses, the name of the Lord belongs to Him alone, because His hand awaits to destroy whatever lifts itself up against Him.

4. *Pharaoh's chariots.* Moses in these words only meant to assert, that the drowning of Pharaoh was manifestly God's work. Therefore, he now illustrates in more glowing terms the transaction which he had before simply narrated; as also when he compares the Egyptians to stones and lead, as if he had said that they were hurled by God's mighty hand into the deep, so that they had no power to swim out. On this score, he repeats twice the mention of God's "right hand;" as much as to say that such a miracle could not be ascribed either to fortune or to the efforts of man. We must take notice of what he soon after says, that the Egyptians "rose up against" God; because they had treated His people with injustice and cruelty. Thence we gather, that God's majesty is violated by the wicked, whenever His Church, whose safety He has undertaken to preserve by His faithful patronage, is assailed by them. "Thou sentest forth thy wrath," and "with the blast of thy nostrils the waters were gathered together," are to be read in conjunction; for their meaning is that God, without any instrumentality, but by His simple volition, and in manifestation of His wrath, had brought the enemy to destruction.

9. *The enemy said.* He relates the boast of Pharaoh not merely in exultation over him, but to magnify the miracle, whereby God gives over to destruction this wolf intent upon his prey. But there is more force in the language when he introduces the Egyptians as speakers, than as if he had described their plans; for thus does the marvellous catastrophe more strikingly affect our minds, when the Egyptians, brought as it were on the stage, not only trumpet forth their victory, but insolently give vent to their arrogance and cruelty. But, presently, the Lord is introduced on the other side, dissipating by a single blast their terrible audacity. For whence came this great confidence to the Egyptians, promising themselves that they should be satisfied

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with the spoils, and that they should have nothing more to do in order to put the people to death than to draw their swords, but from the fact of their being very well armed against this unwarlike multitude? Hence, then, God's power shone forth more brightly, when He put them out of the way by "blowing with His wind."

11. Who *is* like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? who *is* like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful *in* praises, doing wonders?

12. Thou stretchedst out thy right hand, the earth swallowed them.

13. Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people *which* thou hast redeemed: thou hast guided *them* in thy strength unto thy holy habitation.

14. The people shall hear, *and* be afraid: sorrow shall take hold on the inhabitants of Palestina.

15. Then the dukes of Edom shall be amazed; the mighty men of Moab, trembling shall take hold upon them: all the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away.

16. Fear and dread shall fall upon them: by the greatness of thine arm they shall be *as* still as a stone; till thy people pass over, O Lord, till the people pass over, *which* thou hast purchased.

17. Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance, *in* the place, O Lord, *which* thou hast made for thee to dwell in; *in* the Sanctuary, O Lord, *which* thy hands have established.

18. The Lord shall reign for ever and ever.

19. For the horse of Pharaoh went in with his chariots and with his horsemen into the sea, and the Lord brought again the waters of the sea upon them; but the children of Israel went on dry *land* in the midst of the sea.

20. And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women

11. Quis sicut tu in diis, Jehova? quis sicut tu, magnificus in sanctitate, terribilis laudibus, faciens mirabilia?

12. Extendisti dexteram tuam, deglutivit eos terra.

13. Duces in tua misericordia populum hunc quem redemisti, duces in fortitudine tua ad habitaculum sanctitatis tuæ.

14. Audient populi et contremiscent: dolor apprehendet habitatores Philisthim.

15. Tunc terrebuntur duces Edom, et robusti Moab: apprehendet eos tremor, dissolventur omnes habitatores Chanaan.

16. Cadet super eos tremor et pavor: in magnitudine brachii tui conticescent quasi lapis, donec pertransierit populus tuus, Jehova: donec pertransierit populus iste quem acquisiisti.

17. Introduces eos et plantabis eos in monte hæreditatis tuæ, in loco quem præparasti, Jehova, ut sedeas. Sanctuarium, Domine, stabilierunt manus tuæ.

18. Jehova regnabit in sæculum et in perpetuum.

19. Quoniam ingressus est equus Pharaonis cum curribus ejus et equitibus ejus in mare, et reduxit Jehova super eos aquas maris: filii autem Israel ambulaverunt in sicco per medium maris.

20. Sumpsit etiam Maria prophetissa soror Aharon tympanum in manu sua: et egressæ sunt omnes

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went out after her with timbrels and with dances.

21. And Miriam answered them, Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.

mulieres post eam cum tympanis et choris.

21. Et respondebat illis Maria, Cantate Jehovæ, quoniam se magnifice extulit, equum et ascensorem ejus projecit in mare.

11. *Who is like unto thee?* Moses concludes this song of praise with an ejaculation, because the grandeur of the subject transcends the power of words. The interrogation expresses more than as if he had simply asserted that none can be compared with God; because it marks both admiration and assured confidence in the truth of what he says; for he exclaims, as if overwhelmed with astonishment, "Who is like unto thee, O Lord?" The notion of some that by the word "gods" he means the angels, is more suitable to other passages; for instance, (Ps. lxxxix. 6,) "Who in heaven can be compared unto the Lord; who among the sons[1] of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord?" for it immediately follows, "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are round about him." (Ver. 7, &c.) The meaning then is,[2] that, although there be excellence in the angels, still God is exalted far above them all; but here it may be more properly referred to idols, for Moses (as has been said) is professedly contrasting the one true God, whose religion and worship existed among the children of Abraham, with the delusions of the Gentiles. The word "sanctitas," holiness, expresses that glory which separates God from all His creatures; and therefore, in a manner, it degrades all the other deities which the world has invented for itself; since the majesty of the one only God is thus eminent and honourable. He adds, "fearful in praises;" because He cannot be duly praised, without ravishing us with astonishment. Moses afterwards explains himself, by saying that God's works are wonderful. In my opinion, their explanation is a poor one, who think that He is said to be "fearful in praises," because He is to be praised with

[1] Filios Dei.—*V.*

[2] "Or le Sainct Esprit veut dire;" now the Holy Spirit means to say.—*Fr.*

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fear; and theirs is far-fetched, who say that He is terrible, even when he is praised.

13. *Thou in thy mercy hast led them forth.*[1] The verb in Hebrew is indeed in the past tense; but, since it is plain from the context that their hope for what was to come was founded on God's former mercies, I have preferred making the meaning clearer by translating it in the future.[2] Moses, therefore, exhorts the people to proceed to their promised land boldly and joyfully; because God will not forsake His work in the midst of it. And on this account he expressly mentions their redemption; as though he had said, that the people were not in vain delivered from impending death, but that God, as He had begun, would be their constant guide. David uses the same argument, (Ps. xxxi. 5,) "Into thine hand I commit my spirit; thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth." For, as the beginning of their redemption has proceeded from God's mere mercy, so he says that for this same reason He will lead them even to their promised inheritance. But, since the many obstacles might impress them with alarm, he at the same time sets before them the "strength" of God; for the whole praise is given to God, who had both been freely gracious to His people, and, asking assistance from no other source, but contented with His own power, had supplied what would have been otherwise incredible.

14. *The people shall hear.* Again in this place I have not scrupled to change the tenses; for it is plain that Moses is speaking of things future; although I do not deny, that by verbs of the past tense he confirms the certainty of the matter; which is a common figure with the Prophets. This boast depends on the mention of God's "strength;" for it was impossible for the Israelites to make their way through so many adverse nations into the land of Canaan, unless God had, as it were, put forth His hand from heaven and fought for them. Lest, then, their numerous difficulties should dishearten them, Moses declares that, although many powerful

[1] Wilt lead them forth.—*Lat.*

[2] "Selon l'usage commun de la langue;" according to the common usage of the language.—*Fr.*

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enemies should endeavour to oppose them, terror shall possess them all from heaven, so that, in their confusion and astonishment, they shall have no power of resistance.

16. *Fear and dread shall fall upon them.* Some read this in the optative mood, but with little probability, as it seems to me; for Moses is not so much expressing wishes or prayers, as animating the Israelites to have a good hope, and to be firmly convinced that God would not make an end until He had finished the course of His grace. And this we may fairly apply to ourselves at this time, viz., that God will continue His calling in the elect, until they are brought on to the goal. For the heavenly inheritance, (to which we are called,) answers to "the mountain" of His holiness.[1] The same reason, which was just before advanced, is again repeated, viz., that God would not fail His people until the end, because He had "purchased" them to Himself. For the translation "which thou hast possessed" is not so suitable; because although Moses signifies that they are God's peculiar people, yet is their deliverance undoubtedly alleged as the cause of their full redemption; as if he had said, that the people whom God had once undertaken to protect would always be dear to Him.

17. *Thou shalt bring them in.* The metaphor of *planting* denotes a firm habitation; as also in Ps. xliv. 2, "Thou didst drive out the heathen with thine hand, and plantedst" our fathers, and causedst them to take root. Moreover, by his commendatory allusion to the temple, Moses excites in the people's hearts a desire for the land, which was to be God's "Sanctuary;" and by this secret thought attracts them, indifferent as they were, to seek the enjoyment of this great blessing. He also prophesies of Mount Sion many ages before the temple was erected there; from whence we gather that it was not chosen by man's will, but consecrated by the eternal counsel and predestination of God. For it behoved that the gratuitous favour of God should manifest itself as to this place, as well as to men's persons. Thus, in Psalm lxxviii. 67, it is said, "He refused the tabernacle of Joseph, and chose not the tribe of Ephraim; but chose the

[1] Sion.—*Fr.*

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tribe of Judah," &c. Elsewhere also, (Ps. cxxxii. 13, 14,) "For the Lord hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation: this is my rest for ever; here will I dwell, for I have desired it." But the stability of the temple is also foretold; as in another passage,[1] "Thy hand hath founded Zion." (Ps. lxxxvii. 1.) And God himself declares by Isaiah that He will not suffer Jerusalem to be laid waste, (Is. xxxvii. 26,) because of ancient times He had formed it. But although the whole land of Canaan is elsewhere called God's rest, and the people was never collected into one city, yet, because God blessed the whole nation and land out of His sanctuary, therefore is special mention made of His holy mountain. But this prophecy was very needful for the support of their minds, because Jerusalem only came into their power at a late period; and doubtless their posterity would have been still more slow to take possession of it had not their hearts been stimulated by this promise. A short sentence follows concerning God's eternal reign, on which the perpetuity of the Church is founded. Thus David, (Ps. cii. 27,) after having said that God would always be the same, and His years would have no end, thus concludes, "The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee." (Ver. 28.) Moses, then, would extend the hope of the people to all ages, because of God's kingdom there is no end.

19. *For the horse of Pharaoh went in.* This verse does not seem to be suited to the song, and therefore I am rather of opinion that Moses returns here to the history, and assigns the reason why the Israelites so magnificently celebrated the praises of God. For the sake of avoiding ambiguity, it would perhaps be better thus to render it,—"For the horse of Pharaoh had gone in, and the Lord had brought again the waters of the sea upon them, but the children of Israel had gone on dry land."[2]

20. *And Miriam the prophetess.* Moses here introduces

[1] It will be seen that the sense, and not the words, of the citation are given.

[2] There is the following addition in the *Fr.*:—'Voyla pourquoy j'ai mis les verbes en temps plus que parfait;" you see why I have put the words in the pluperfect tense.

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in his song the ἀντιστροφὴ, such as were constantly used by the lyric poets. For God would have not only men to be the proclaimers of this great miracle, but associated the women with them. When, therefore, the men had finished their song, the women followed in order. Although it is not certain whether the first verse was intercalary, (as the sacred history testifies the following sentence to have been in a solemn hymn :—"For his mercy endureth for ever," 1 Chron. xvi. 34, which is also intercalated in Psalm cxxxvi.), or whether the women repeated alternately what the men had sung. It little matters which opinion you prefer, except that the former is more probable. But although Moses honours his sister by the title of "prophetess," he does not say that she assumed to herself the office of public teaching, but only that she was the leader and directress of the others in praising God. The beating of timbrels may indeed appear absurd to some, but the custom of the nation excuses it, which David witnesses to have existed also in his time, where he enumerates, together with the singers, "the damsels playing with timbrels," (Psalm lxviii. 25,) evidently in accordance with common and received custom. Yet must it be observed, at the same time, that musical instruments were among the legal ceremonies which Christ at His coming abolished; and therefore we, under the Gospel, must maintain a greater simplicity.[1]

[1] *C.'s* opinion on this subject will be found at greater length in his *Commentary on the Psalms*, (Calvin Society's Translation,) vol. i. 539; iii. 98, 312, 495; iv. 72, 73; v. 312, 320. Perhaps the following note on Psalm lxxxi. 2, may most conveniently embody his sentiments:—"With respect to the tabret, harp, and psaltery, we have formerly observed, and shall find it necessary afterwards to repeat the same remark, that the Levites, under the law, were justified in making use of instrumental music in the worship of God; it having been His will to train His people, while they were as yet tender and like children, by such rudiments, until the coming of Christ. But now, when the clear light of the Gospel has dissipated the shadows of the law, and taught us that God is to be served in a simpler form, it would be to act a foolish and mistaken part to imitate that which the Prophet enjoined only upon those of his own time. From this it is apparent that the Papists have shewn themselves to be very apes in transferring it to themselves."—Vol. iii. 312. Elsewhere he says, "Paul allows us to bless God in the public assembly of the saints only in a known tongue. (1. Cor. xiv. 16.) The voice of man, although not understood by the generality, assuredly excels all inanimate instruments of music; and yet we see what St. Paul determines concerning speaking in an unknown tongue."—*Commentary on Psalm* xxxiii. 2, vol. i. 539.

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22. So Moses brought Israel from the Red sea; and they went out into the wilderness of Shur; and they went three days in the wilderness, and found no water.

23. And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they *were* bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah.

24. And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink?

25. And he cried unto the Lord; and the Lord shewed him a tree, *which* when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet: there he made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there he proved them,

26. And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I *am* the Lord that healeth thee.

27. And they came to Elim, where *were* twelve wells of water, and threescore and ten palm-trees: and they encamped there by the waters.

22. Et eduxit Moses Israelem e mari Suph: et egressi sunt in desertum Sur: ac quum perrexissent tribus diebus per desertum, non reperiebant aquas.

23. Post venerunt in Marah, nec poterant bibere aquas e Marah: quia amaræ erant: ideo vocatum est nomen ejus Marah.

24. Et populus murmurantes contra Mosen, dixerunt, Quid bibemus?

25. Tunc clamavit ad Jehovam: et indicavit illi Jehova lignum, quod projecit in aquas: et dulces redditæ sunt aquæ. Ibi posuit ei statutum et judicium, ibique tentavit eum.

26. Et dixit, Si obediendo obedieris voci Jehovæ Dei tui, et quod rectum est in oculis ejus feceris et auscultaveris præceptis ejus, custodierisque omnia statuta ejus, universum languorem quem posui in Ægypto non ponam super te: quia ego Jehova sanans te.

27. Venerunt autem in Elim, ubi erant duodecim fontes aquarum, et septuaginta palmæ: et manserunt ibi juxta aquas.

22. *So Moses brought.* Moses now relates that, from the time of their passage through the sea, they had been suffering for three days from the want of water, that the first they discovered was bitter, and that thence the name was given to the place. This was indeed no light temptation, to suffer thirst for three days in a dry land, and nowhere to meet with relief or remedy. No wonder, then, that they should have groaned with anxiety; but grief, when it is full of contumacy, deserves no pardon. In such an emergency, they should have directed their prayers to God; whereas they not only neglected to pray, but violently assailed Moses, and demanded of him the drink which they knew could only be given them by God. But because they had not yet learnt to trust in Him, they fly not to Him for aid, except by imperiously commanding Him, in the person of His servant, to

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obey their wishes; for this interrogation, "What shall we drink?" is as much as to say, "Arrange with God to supply us with drink." But they do not directly address God, of whose assistance they feel that they have need, because unbelief is ever proud.

25. *And he cried.* Hence we gather that Moses alone duly prayed when the people tumultuously rose against him, and that they who were not worthy of the common air itself were abundantly supplied with sweet water. Herein shone forth the inestimable mercy of God, who deigned to change the nature of the water for the purpose of supplying such wicked, and rebellious, and ungrateful men. He might have given them sweet water to drink at first, but He wished by the bitter to make prominent the bitterness which lurked in their hearts. He might, too, have corrected by His mere will the evil in the waters, so that they should have grown sweet spontaneously. It is not certain why He preferred to apply the tree, except to reprove their foolish impiety by shewing that He has many remedies in His power for every evil. A question also arises as to the tree, whether it inherently possessed the property which it there exercised. But although probable arguments may be adduced on both sides, I rather incline to the opinion that there was indeed a natural power concealed in the tree, and yet that the taste of the water was miraculously corrected; because it would have been difficult so speedily to collect a sufficient quantity of the tree for purifying a river; for 600,000 men, together with their wives and children and cattle, would not have been contented with a little streamlet. But I am led by no trifling reason to think that this property was previously existing in the tree; because it is plain that a particular species was pointed out to Moses, yet does not that prevent us from believing that a greater efficacy than usual was imparted to it, so that the waters should be immediately sweetened by its being put into them. What follows in the second part of the verse admits of a double signification, viz., either that, whereas God had there ordained a statute, yet that He was tempted by the people; or, because God was tempted by the people, therefore He had ordained the statute.

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If the first sense be preferred, their crime will be augmented by the comparison; for the impiety of the people was all the worse because, being taught by the voice of God, yet in the very same place they gave the reins to their rebellious spirit. But I rather embrace the latter sense, viz., that God chastised the sin of the people by whom He had been tempted. It was in fact a kind of tempting of God, because they not only doubtingly inquired who should give them water, but in these words manifested their despair. But because in the same context it is said, "there he made for them a statute, and there he tempted (or proved) them," the name of God appears to be *the subject* in both clauses, and it is *predicated* of the people that they received the ordinance and were proved. Thus the meaning will be, that after God had tried His people, by the want of water, He at the same time admonished them by His word, that hereafter they should submit themselves more teachably and obediently to His commands.

26. *If thou wilt diligently hearken.* Moses now unfolds what was the statute or ordinance which God promulged. For here the reference is not to the whole law which was afterwards given on mount Sinai, but to the special admonition which served to chastise the wickedness of the people. The sum of it is, that if the Israelites were tractable and obedient to God, He on the other hand would be kind and bountiful to them. And it is an implied rebuke, that they might know whatever troubles they experienced to be brought upon them by their sins. He proposes the Egyptians to them as an example, whose rebellion they had seen punished by God with such severe and heavy calamities. "I am the Lord that healeth thee," is immediately added in confirmation, as if he had said, that the Israelites were liable to the same plagues which had been inflicted on the Egyptians, and were only exempt from them because God performed the office of a healer. And truly whatsoever diseases afflict the human race, we may see in them, as in so many mirrors, our own miseries, that we may perceive that there is no health in us, except in so far as God spares us. We are also taught in this verse that this is the rule of a good life,

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when we obey God's voice and study to please Him. But because the will of God was soon after to be proclaimed in the law, He expressly commands them to "give ear to His commandments, and to keep His statutes."[1] I know not whether there is any force in the opinion of some who distinguish the word חקים, *chokim*, (which it is usual to translate "statutes,") from precepts, as if they were mere declarations of His pleasure to which no reason is attached. Let it suffice that God's law is commended under many names, to take away all pretext of ignorance.

27. *And they came to Elim.* Moses here relates that a more pleasant station was granted to the people, when they were led to a well-watered spot, even planted with palm-trees, which do not usually grow in a dry soil. But we learn from what precedes, that this was a concession to their infirmity, because they had borne their thirst so impatiently.

CHAPTER SIXTEENTH.

1. And they took their journey from Elim; and all the congregation of the children of Israel came unto the wilderness of Sin, which *is* between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departing out of the land of Egypt.

1. Profectæ autem ab Elim cunctæ turmæ filiorum Israel, venerunt in desertum Sin, quod est inter Elim et Sinai, quinto decimo die mensis secundi post eorum exitum e terra Ægypti.

2. And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness.

2. Et murmuraverunt omnes turmæ filiorum Israel contra Mosen et contra Aharon in deserto.

3. And the children of Israel said unto them, Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh-pots, *and* when we did eat bread to the full! for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger.

3. Et dixerunt ad eos filii Israel, Quis det ut mortui essemus per manum Jehovæ in terra Ægypti, quando sedebamus juxta ollam carnis, et quando comedebamus panem in saturitate? Nam eduxistis nos in hoc desertum, ut interficeretis congregationem hanc fame.

4. Then said the Lord unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread

4. Tunc ait Jehova ad Mosen, Ecce, ego vobis pluam panem e cœlo,

[1] "Je ne m' arreste point aux mots Hebrieux, pource que je ne voy pas qu'il en soit besoin pour les gens de nostre langue;" I do not stay to speak of the Hebrew words, because I do not see that it is necessary for those of our language.—*Fr.*

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from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no.

5. And it shall come to pass, that on the sixth day they shall prepare *that* which they bring in; and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily.

6. And Moses and Aaron said unto all the children of Israel, At even, then ye shall know that the Lord hath brought you out from the land of Egypt:

7. And in the morning, then ye shall see the glory of the Lord; for that he heareth your murmurings against the Lord: and what *are* we, that ye murmur against us?

8. And Moses said, *This shall be,* when the Lord shall give you in the evening flesh to eat, and in the morning bread to the full; for that the Lord heareth your murmurings which ye murmur against him: and what *are* we? your murmurings *are* not against us, but against the Lord.

et egredietur populus, et colligent summam diei die suo, ut probem eum, ambuletne in lege mea an non.

5. In die autem sexto parabunt quod inferant, et erit duplum præ eo quod colligent quotidie.

6. Et dixit Moses et Aharon ad universos filios Israel: Vespere scietis quod Jehova eduxerit vos a terra Ægypti.

7. Mane autem videbitis gloriam Jehovæ, quia audivit murmur vestrum contra Jehovam. Etenim nos quid sumus, ut murmuretis contra nos?

8. Et dixit Moses, Quum dederit vobis Jehova vespere carnem ad comedendum et panem mane ad saturitatem, ex quo audivit Jehova murmurationes vestras, quibus murmurastis contra eum. Quid enim? non contra nos murmurastis sed contra Jehovam.

1. *And they took their journey.* Moses relates, that, when after a month the people came to the wilderness of Sin near Mount Sinai, and when their provision failed, they rebelled against God and Moses, and manna, a new and unusual kind of food, was given them from heaven. It is uncertain with what foods they were sustained in the meantime. Some conjecture that they brought sufficient flour from Egypt for their supply; but to me it seems probable that other kinds of food were used in addition; for the barrenness of the country through which they passed was not so great but that it produced at least fruits and herbs. Besides, we may readily suppose, from the battle, in which it will soon be related that they conquered the Amalekites, that they were not far from an habitable territory. But, when they were carried away farther into the desert, all their provision began to fail, because they had no more commerce with the inhabitants. Hence their sedition was increased, because hunger pressed upon them more than usual. For, although we shall

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afterwards be able to gather from the context that there was some previous disturbance in the camp, still famine, which now began to affect them more, because in these uncultivated and miserable regions the barrenness on all sides alarmed them, gave strength to their murmurs and impatience.

2. *And the whole congregation.* Moses says not that some of the people only murmured, but that they were all gathered into mobs as in a conspiracy, or, at any rate, as they were arranged by hundreds and thousands, that they murmured with one consent. Yet the universal term admits of exception; nor need we suppose that all to a man were comprehended in this impious rebellion. The best remedy for their hunger would have been to pray to God, whom they had found to be in all respects a bountiful Father, and whom they had heard to have wonderfully provided for their parents, when the Egyptians and inhabitants of Canaan were wasting with hunger in such rich and fertile places. If they had only been persuaded that the earth is made fertile by God's blessing, it would at the same time have occurred to them, that it is His peculiar office to feed the hungry, and immediately they would have directed their prayers to Him; now, their unbelief betrays itself in their turbulent clamour. It is indeed astonishing that wretched men, whom their necessity should have humiliated, rose insolently against God, and that their hunger, so far from bending their hearts to gentleness, was the very incentive of their arrogance. But this is too common with the wicked, (because they do not trust that God is reconciled to them,) to neglect prayer, and to cry out in confusion, to utter their curses, and to rush, like mad dogs, furiously here and there. This was the case of the Israelites in the wilderness of Sin. The want of all things, which presents itself to them, is an invitation to them from God, that they may feel His power, by which He created the world out of nothing, to be independent of all foreign assistance for the maintenance of mankind. But despair seizes upon their faithless minds, so that they reject His aid and beneficence. And not only so, but their malignity and ingratitude instigates them to quarrel with Moses; and this is

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the sum of their complaint, that they were dragged away from abundance of bread and meat, that they might perish in the desert of hunger. Therefore they call Moses and Aaron, by whose hand and means they had been delivered, their murderers.

4. *Then said the Lord unto Moses.* It is probable that Moses passes over much in silence, because it is not consistent that the insolence of the people was left without even a single word of chastisement. For, although God in His extraordinary kindness gave food to these depraved and wicked men, who were unworthy of the sunlight and the common air, still He was without doubt unwilling to foster their sin by His silence, and, whilst He pardoned their ingratitude, sharply reproved their frowardness. But Moses, passing over this, proceeds to a history especially worthy of narration, how God fed this wretched people with bread from heaven, when He made the manna to fall from the clouds like dew. I call it "the bread of heaven," with the Prophet, (Ps. lxxviii. 24,) who honours it with this magnificent title, and extols God's bounty towards His people, as if they had been admitted to the tables of angels. For St. Paul calls the manna "spiritual meat," (1 Cor. x. 3,) in another sense, viz., because it was a type of the flesh of Christ, which feeds our minds unto the hope of eternal life. The Prophet, however, makes no allusion to that mystery, but alleges in this circumstance an accusation against the people, because they not only despised the food which springs from the earth, but also were disgusted with that bread, for which they saw the heavens in a manner opened. But on this point somewhat must be hereafter repeated. God now declares that He will give them daily their allowance, as it were, that in this way He may prove the obedience of His people. Though on this latter head interpreters are not agreed; for some understand it as if God, by kindly providing food for the Israelites, would bind them to obedience by His bounty; as though He should say, "I will try whether they are altogether intractable or submissive; for nothing shall be wanting to retain them in the way of duty." But others confine the meaning of the word to "their daily food;" for that this was the proof

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of their fear and reverence, that they should not desire more than was given them, but that they should be contented with their daily provision, and thus depend on the providence of God. The former sense pleases me best, and I have endeavoured to explain it more clearly than it can be understood from others. There is no occasion to enter into controversy about the word "Law,"[1] for (as we shall soon see) it is used to express the measure or rule of a pious and just life. Therefore, He says, that He will know whether they are disposed to honour Him, and to submit themselves to His command. But if any one prefer to embrace the other sense, I leave him to enjoy his own opinion.

5. *And it shall come to pass.* Because mention is immediately made of the Sabbath, some would confine to its observance what is said respecting the law, and extract this sense from it, that God made the experiment whether the people would faithfully observe the rest enjoined to them on each seventh day. But there is a poorness in this explanation. The fact is, that after God had promised daily supplies to His people, He now adds the exception, viz., that on the sixth day they should collect a double quantity, and lay aside half of it for the use of the Sabbath. Thus the seventh day was really hallowed before the promulgation of the Law, although it is questionable whether it had already been observed by the patriarchs. It appears probable that it was; but I am unwilling to make it a matter of contention.

6. *And Moses and Aaron said.* The statement that the people should know that their coming out of the land of Egypt was the Lord's work, is opposed to their wicked taunt,

[1] "Some refer this probation or trial to that particular law and precept of gathering but a certain portion of manna every day. So *Vatablus, Borrha, Galas., Tostat., Rupert.* Some understand it as well of that precept, as of the other, not to gather any upon the Sabbath.—*Simler.* Some will have it taken more largely of all the precepts, and commandments touching manna, which were eight in all.—*Lyranus.* But it is better to take it in a more general sense. The Lord, as he had tried them before with crosses and adversities, so now he would prove them by His benefits, to see whether they will afterward walke in His feare, and in obedience before Him. So *Ferus, Calvin, Osiand., Pelarg.* And thus by this particular benefit God would prepare them to the obedience of His law, which should be given afterwards.—*Oleaster.*"—*Willet's Hexapla in loco.*

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in which they had complained of being betrayed by Moses and Aaron, when they had been brought into the wilderness. They therefore answer, that God would openly shew that He was the author of their deliverance, that they should make no more complaints against His ministers. But although a sharp reproof is implied, still it is joined with a promise of God's continued favour. They therefore admonish them, that by this event it would be proved that God was the Leader and Deliverer of the Israelites, because he does not leave the work of His hands unfinished. (Ps. cxxxviii. 8.) The continuance, then, of His favour, shews that the same God, who proceeds in the prosecution of His powerful work, had from the first begun what He carries on even to the end. The knowledge, which they were to receive in the evening, refers to the quails, in which God gave an instance of His power; but, because it shone forth more brightly next day in the manna, Moses says, that in the morning they should see the glory of the Lord. But, lest they should be induced by this favour to think highly of themselves, and should flatter themselves in their iniquity, he reminds them that this was not given them in return for their sins, but that God contended after this manner with their obstinate perversity; as much as to say that God would appear to them, so that, beholding by the brightness of His countenance their own impiety, they might altogether be filled with shame, and feel the profaneness of the rebellion with which they had dared to insult Him. And, lest they should prevaricate, and say that they had only made an attack upon Moses and Aaron, he gives the reason why he declares them to have waged war against God Himself, viz., because neither he nor his brother had acted of themselves, nor had personally assumed anything in the matter; for this is the meaning of the words, "what are we, that ye murmur against us?" as if he disclaimed any separation from God. Now, since by this testimony he proves himself to have been a faithful servant of God, we gather that none may rightly claim honour for themselves in the Church, so as to be accounted lawful pastors, but those who are divinely called, and thus have God as the authorizer of their office, and who advance nothing of

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themselves, but only execute what is commanded them. Whilst such as these[1] may not be despised without dishonouring God, whose person they represent, so do they, who exercise dominion with no authority but their own, vainly alarm the simple in God's name, and[2] instead of the truth, are only wearing an empty mask. The eighth verse merely contains an exposition of the same sentiment, except that he goes on to say in connection, that the Israelites, when in the evening they shall have been filled with flesh, and when bread shall have been given them in the morning, would perceive that God is their Deliverer. Then comes the *antithesis*, "Your murmurings are not against us, but against the Lord."

9. And Moses spake unto Aaron, Say unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, Come near before the Lord: for he hath heard your murmurings.

9. Et dixit Moses ad Aharon, Dic ad universum cœtum filiorum Israel, Accedite in conspectum Jehovæ, quia audivit murmurationes vestras.

10. And it came to pass, as Aaron spake unto the whole congregation of the children of Israel, that they looked toward the wilderness, and, behold, the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud.

10. Et factum est quum loqueretur Aharon ad universum cœtum filiorum Israel, ut respicerent versus desertum: et ecce, gloria Jehovæ apparuit in nube.

11. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

11. Loquutus enim fuerat Jehova ad Mosen, dicendo,

12. I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel: speak unto them, saying, At even ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread; and ye shall know that I *am* the Lord your God.

12. Audivi murmurationes filiorum Israel: alloquere eos, dicendo, Inter vesperas comedetis carnem, et mane saturabimini pane: itaque scietis quod ego sim Jehova Deus vester.

13. And it came to pass, that at even the quails came up, and covered the camp; and in the morning the dew lay round about the host.

13. Factum est ergo vespere ut ascenderet coturnix, et operiret castra, mane autem esset descensio roris circum castra.

14. And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness *there lay* a small round thing, *as* small as the hoarfrost on the ground.

14. Et quum evanesceret descensio roris, ecce in superficie deserti minutum rotundum, minutum quasi pruina super terram.

15. And when the children of Israel saw *it*, they said one to another, It *is* manna: for they wist not what it *was*. And Moses said

15. Et videntes filii Israel, dixerunt quisque ad proximum suum, Est Man. Nesciebant enim quid esset. Et dixit Moses ad eos, Hic est panis

[1] "Qui resemblent a Moyse."—*Fr.*

[2] "Et sont a rejetter comme pipeurs, veu qu'ils n'ont qu'une fausse masque pour la verite;" and must be rejected as deceivers, since they have only a false masque instead of the truth.—*Fr.*

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unto them, This *is* the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat.

16. This *is* the thing which the Lord hath commanded, Gather of it every man according to his eating, an omer for every man, *according* to the number of your persons; take ye every man for *them* which *are* in his tents.

17. And the children of Israel did so, and gathered, some more, some less.

18. And when they did mete *it* with an omer, he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack: they gathered every man according to his eating.

quem dedit Jehova vobis comedendum.

16. Hoc est edictum quod mandat Jehova, Colligite ex eo quisque in mensuram victus sui homer, pro summa numeri animarum vestrarum: quisque pro iis qui sunt in tabernaculo suo accipite.

17. Atque ita fecerunt filii Israel et collegerunt, alii multum, alii exiguum.

18. Et quum metirentur per homer, non excedebat is qui multum collegerat, nec minus habebat qui parum collegerat: quisque ad mensuram victus sui colligebat.

9. *And Moses spake unto Aaron.* There is no question but that he here cites them as criminals before the tribunal of God, as if he had said that they were mistaken, if they thought that their murmurings were unobserved. Nevertheless, he alludes also to the cloud, which was the visible symbol of God's presence; and thus reproves their folly in not hesitating to provoke a God, who was so near, and almost before their very eyes. First, then, we must remark, that they were in a manner drawn from their hiding-places, that their pride might be broken; and, secondly, that their stupidity was rebuked, for not reverencing God though present. And this is made more clear by the context, where it is said, that the glory of the Lord appeared "toward the wilderness," by which word I imagine the less habitable region to be indicated. For, although the country on all sides was barren, and uninhabited, yet on one side the Amalekites were near, and other tribes, as we shall soon see. The glory of God I suppose to mean, not that which they saw daily, but which was now manifested to them in an unusual manner to inspire alarm; because they were hardened against its ordinary manifestations.

11. *And the Lord spake*[1] *unto Moses.* Moses here shews that he had done nothing without God's command, but had faithfully and modestly discharged the office of a minister.

[1] Had spoken.—*Lat.*

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And, surely, unless he had spoken according to God's word, he would have been rash in promising what we have already seen. Therefore, this is put last in order, though it happened first; and, consequently, I have used[1] the causal particle instead of the copula. The sum is, as before, that God will vindicate His own glory, which the people had impiously impugned, and that He would do good to them, unworthy as they were, in order to glorify His name; as if He had said, After you shall have been convicted of ingratitude, you will then be obliged to confess that I am really the only God, and at the same time your Father.

13. *And it came to pass.* We shall afterwards see, that, when from weariness of the manna they began to desire meat, quails were again given them; but, while they were yet in their mouths, a terrible punishment was inflicted upon their gluttony. When here they had only complained of their want of food, God for once satiated them with flesh, that He might shew them that He has in His hand all kinds and quantity of meats. Yet, it was His will that they should be content with one single sort; for, although they had complained that they were deprived of flesh, at the pots of which they had formerly sat, yet it was not reasonable that He should comply altogether with their unholy desires. Besides, it was profitable for them that certain bounds should be set, that they might learn dependence on His will.

14. *And when the dew that lay was gone up.* The shape of the manna is here briefly described, viz., that it was like the dew condensed into small round grains. Its taste will be also mentioned elsewhere; but here it was sufficient to shew, that this fecundity was not natural, but miraculously given to the clouds, so that they should daily rain manna. For as to the idle talk of certain profane persons,[2] that the

[1] J'ai mis le mot *Car*, pource que ceste sentence rend la raison du precedent.—*Fr.*

[2] "And even now in all that place this manna comes down in rain, according to what Moses then obtained of God, to send it the people for their sustenance."—*Josephus Antiq.*, iii. 1. 6. Burckhardt identifies it with a substance called manna, obtained still by the Arabs from the *tarfa* or tamarisk; and Rosenmüller speaks of it as being obtained from various trees in different countries. We can well understand the name having

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manna falls naturally in certain countries, who would thus display the force of their genius, as if they convicted Moses of falsehood, because he mightily extols a mere trifle,—it is all an absurdity which may be easily refuted. It is indeed true, that in certain parts of the world they collect white grains, to which the name of manna has been vulgarly given, but[1] which one of the Rabbins will have to be Arabic; but it is neither a food, nor does it drop daily from the clouds, nor has it anything in common with this food, which the Prophet properly dignifies with the title of "angels' food," because God, who opens the bowels of the earth for the ordinary food of man, at that time made provision for the nourishment of His people from heaven. And that it may appear beyond a doubt that this food was then created miraculously, and contrary to the order of nature, these points are to be taken into consideration. *First,* It did not appear in the wilderness before the hour assigned by Moses in obedience to God's command. *Secondly,* No change of weather prevented the manna from dropping in a regular measure; neither frost, nor rain, nor heat, nor winter, nor summer, interrupted the course of its distillation. *Thirdly,* A quantity sufficient for the immense multitude was found every day, when they took up an omer for every individual. Again, on the sixth day, the quantity was doubled, that they might lay by a second omer for their Sabbath food. *Fifthly,* If they preserved any beyond their due allowance, it was subject to putrefaction, whereas, on the Sabbath day, the second portion remained good. *Sixthly,* Wherever they were, this blessing of God always accompanied them, whilst the neighbouring nations lived on corn, and the manna was only known in their camp. *Seventhly,* As soon as they entered a fruitful and corn-growing country, the manna ceased. *Eighthly,* That portion, which Moses was commanded to lay up in a vessel, did not grow corrupt. Let these points be well weighed, and the miracle will be more than sufficiently

been given to any substance, which in some respects resembled it; but there does not appear to be any real correspondence in those which the critics mention.

[1] This is from *S. M.*, who says that Aben-Ezra has affirmed *man* to be an Arabic noun.—*W.*

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conspicuous, and will disperse all the clouds of objection by its intrinsic brightness.

15. *And when the children of Israel saw.* The Israelites manifested some appearance of gratitude in calling the food given them from heaven, *Man*,[1] which name means "something prepared;" but if any prefer their opinion who expound it, "a part or portion," I do not debate the matter, although the former is more correct. Yet, whichever you choose, by this word they confessed that they were dealt with bountifully, because God presented them with food without their having to labour for it; and, therefore, they indirectly condemn their own perverse and wicked murmuring, since it is much better to gather food prepared for them, than to acquire it by the laborious and troublesome culture of the earth. For although this confession was extorted from them by the incredible novelty of the thing, yet at that particular moment their intention was to proclaim God's loving-kindness. But, since unbelief had clouded their senses, so that they saw not clearly, Moses says that "they wist not what it was." In these words he rebukes their slowness of heart, because, although previously advertised of the miracle, they were astonished at the sight, as if they had heard nothing of it before. We perceive, then, that they did but half acknowledge God's mercy; for their gratitude was clouded with the darkness of ignorance, and they were compelled to confess that they did not altogether understand it; and therefore their stupidity is reproved not without bitterness, when Moses tells them that this was the food promised them by God. For, if they had recognised in it the fulfilment of the promise, there was no need of recalling it to their recollection. As to the words themselves, the answer of Moses has misled the Greek and Latin translators, into rendering them interrogatively,[2] "What is this?" But their

[1] מן, *Man*. If this word be referred to the root מנן, it may mean a prepared thing; if to the root מנה, it would mean an assigned portion; but in Syriac and Chaldee *man* is incontestably *what*, and the LXX. bear testimony to the existence of the same monosyllabic relative in Hebrew by so rendering it here, to which the *V.* adds its authority, by saying, Man hu? Quod significat, Quid est hoc? *C.* found the two first interpretations in the notes of *S. M.*, who makes no allusion to this last rendering.—*W.*

[2] See margin *A. V.*

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difficulty is easily removed; for Moses does not directly state that they inquired about it as of some unknown thing, but expresses their knowledge mixed with ignorance, for the matter was partly doubtful, partly clear; for the power of God was visibly manifest, but the veil of unbelief prevented them from apprehending God's promised bounty.

16. *This is the thing.* The exception[1] follows, that in gathering the food, they should take account of the Sabbath. A certain daily measure is prescribed; but they are commanded on the day before the Sabbath to lay up twice as much, that they may observe its rest. But, unquestionably, God so far extended His liberality as abundantly to satisfy them. It is well known that an omer is the tenth part of an ephah;[2] and perhaps we might discover its proportion to the measures which are now in use amongst us; but I am unwilling to dispute respecting an unnecessary point; since it is enough to be sure, that not less was given than was amply sufficient for them.

17. *And the children of Israel did so.* I do not think that the obedience of the people is here greatly praised; since soon afterwards Moses adds that some, not contented with their due allowance, collected more than was permitted them, and that others also transgressed what was enjoined them as to the Sabbath day. But I thus paraphrase the passage, that, when they had applied themselves to the gathering of it, the whole amount was found sufficient to fill an omer for every individual. For they did not each of them collect a private store; but, when all had assisted, at length they took their prescribed portion from the common heap. Thus, as each was more especially diligent, the more he benefited his slower and less industrious neighbour, without any loss to himself. This is aptly applied by Paul to almsgiving, (2 Cor. viii. 14,) wherein every one bestows of what he pos-

[1] The rule is here prescribed—the exception does not occur till verse 23.

[2] See verse 36. "In Josephus's time it contained 43¼ eggshells, (for the Jews, like many of Oriental nations, reckoned their measures by the contents of middle-sized hens' eggs.) But it is by no means probable that during the 1500 years which elapsed from the time of Moses to that of Josephus, the measures of the Hebrews remained the same, there being nothing more liable to change."—*Rosenmüller.*

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sesses on his poor brethren, only let us remember that this is done[1] figuratively; for though there be some likeness between the manna and our daily food, yet there is a distinction between them to be observed, on which we shall elsewhere remark. Since, then, the manna was a food differing from what we commonly use, and was given daily without tillage or labour almost into their hands, it is not to be wondered that God should have called each one of the people to partake of it equally, and forbade any one to take more than another. The case of ordinary food is different; for it is necessary[2] for the preservation of human society that each should possess what is his own; that some should acquire property by purchase, that to others it should come by hereditary right, to others by the title of presentation, that each should increase his means in proportion to his diligence, or bodily strength, or other qualifications. In fine, political government requires, that each should enjoy what belongs to him; and hence it would be absurd to prescribe, as to our common food, the law which is here laid down as to the manna. And Paul, also, wisely makes the distinction, in enjoining that there should be an equality, not arising from a promiscuous and confused use of property, but by the rich spontaneously and liberally relieving the wants of their brethren, and not grudgingly or of necessity. In this way he reminds us, that whatever goods we possess, flow from the bounty of God, like the manna; but, since each now possesses privately and separately whatever is given them, the same law is not in force for the mutual communication of property, whereby God bound His ancient people. Thence it appears that the distribution of the manna, as it is related by Moses, is properly applied to almsgiving. This doctrine, too, extends still further; for Paul warns believers not to be over-anxious lest they should exhaust themselves by their bounty, because no man's provision failed, when the Israelites by God's command divided the manna among them.

[1] Per anagogen.—*Lat.*

[2] "Pour nourrir les hommes en amitie et paix;" for sustaining men in friendship and peace.—*Fr.*

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19. And Moses said, Let no man leave of it till the morning.

20. Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto Moses; but some of them left of it until the morning, and it bred worms, and stank: and Moses was wroth with them.

21. And they gathered it every morning, every man according to his eating: and when the sun waxed hot, it melted.

22. And it came to pass, *that* on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one *man:* and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses.

23. And he said unto them, This *is that* which the Lord hath said, To-morrow *is* the rest of the holy sabbath unto the Lord: bake *that* which ye will bake *to-day,* and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you, to be kept until the morning.

24. And they laid it up till the morning, as Moses bade; and it did not stink, neither was there any worm therein.

25. And Moses said, Eat that to-day; for to-day *is* a sabbath unto the Lord: to-day ye shall not find it in the field.

26. Six days ye shall gather it; but on the seventh day, *which is* the sabbath, in it there shall be none.

27. And it came to pass, *that* there went out *some* of the people on the seventh day for to gather, and they found none.

28. And the Lord said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws?

29. See, for that the Lord hath given you the sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days: abide ye every man in his place; let no man go out of his place on the seventh day.

30. So the people rested on the seventh day.

19. Et ait Moses ad eos, Nemo relinquat quicquam ex eo usque mane.

20. Sed non audierunt Mosen: quia quidam reservarunt ex eo usque mane. Et scatere cœpit vermibus, et computruit: ideoque iratus est contra eos Moses.

21. Itaque collegerunt illud singulis diebus mane: quisque secundum mensuram suam: et quum sol incaluerat, liquefiebat.

22. Fuit autem die sexto ut colligerent panem duplum, duo scilicet homer pro uno. Et venientes principes congregationis retulerunt Mosi.

23. Qui dixit eis, Hoc est quod loquutus est Jehova, Quies Sabbathi sancti cras est Jehovæ; quod cocturi estis, coquite, et quod elixaturi estis, elixate: et quicquid residuum erit reponite vobis usque mane.

24. Et reposuerunt illud usque mane, sicut præceperat Moses: et non computruit, nec vermis fuit in eo.

25. Dixitque Moses, Comedite illud hodie: quia Sabbathum est hodie Jehovæ. Hodie non invenietis illud in agro.

26. Sex diebus colligetis illud: die autem septimo est Sabbathum, non erit in illo.

27. Accidit autem die septimo ut egrederentur quidam e populo ad colligendum illud: et non invenerunt.

28. Tunc ait Jehova ad Mosen, Usque quo renuitis servare præcepta mea et leges meas?

29. Videte quod Jehova posuerit vobis Sabbathum: ideo ipse dat vobis die sexto panem duorum dierum; quisque apud se quiescat nec ullus egrediatur e loco suo die septimo.

30. Quievit itaque populus die septimo.

19. *And Moses said, Let no man.* Moses here recounts that, when he had commanded them all not to take more than enough for their daily food, and to gather a double por-

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tion the day before the Sabbath, some were disobedient on both points. As to the former, since God would supply their food to them just as the breast is given to babes, it was a sign of perverse unbelief that they would not depend on God's providence, but sought for a provision which would last them many days. It was also a proof of their obstinacy that they would give credit to no warnings until they were convinced by experience that they laid up in their houses nothing but a mass of corruption; for they were not induced to cease from their insatiable greediness till they had received their just punishment. Now, although the case of the manna and the food of our ordinary nourishment is not altogether similar, yet the comparison holds to a certain extent, for it is so far lawful to keep our corn and wine laid up in granaries and cellars, as that all should still ask truly their daily bread of God. And this will be, if the rich do not greedily swallow up whatsoever they can get together; if they do not avariciously scrape up here and there; if they do not gorge themselves upon the hunger of the poor; if they do not, as far as in them lies, withhold the blessing of God; in a word, if they do not immoderately accumulate large possessions, but are liberal out of their present abundance, are not too anxious as to the future, and are not troubled, if needs be, that their wealth should suffer diminution; nay, if they are ready to endure poverty, and glory not in their abundance, but repose upon the paternal bounty of God. And surely we often see that what misers collect by theft, rapine, fraud, cruelty, trickery, or meanness, is often turned into corruption. When he adds that, after they saw that their intemperate ardour profited them nothing, they submitted to the command, he implies that their obedience was not voluntary, but extorted from them, for fools are never wise except after adversity.[1] The melting of the manna when the sun waxed hot was a stimulus to correct their idleness or laziness; for, if the manna had remained entire during the whole day, they would not have been so intent upon their duty. Wherefore, by giving them only a short time for its collection, God urged them to diligence.

[1] "Sinon apres avoir este bien batus;" except after being well beaten.—*Fr.*

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22. *And it came to pass on the sixth day.* The violation of the Sabbath is not yet recounted, but only the stupidity or dense ignorance of their rulers is set forth, for although they had heard from the mouth of Moses that God would on that day give what would be sufficient for two days' provision, still they marvel, and tell it to Moses as if it were something strange and incredible. It is plain enough that they obeyed the command, and did not spare their labour in gathering the double quantity; but their unbelief and folly betrays itself in their astonishment when they see that God has really performed what He promised. We may conjecture that they accurately observed what awakened in them so much astonishment; so that it follows that they refused to credit God's word until its truth was effectively proved. It came to pass, then, in God's admirable wisdom, that their wicked and perverse doubting availed both for the confirmation of the miracle and the observation of the Sabbath. Hence occasion was given to Moses again to enjoin upon them what otherwise, perhaps, they would have neglected, viz., that they should honour the seventh day by a holy rest.

27. *And it came to pass.* This is the second transgression, that by going out on the seventh day they trenched upon its religious observance; and this monstrous greediness arose from their not believing to be true what we have just heard Moses saying, for he had plainly declared to them that they would not find the manna. They, therefore, accuse him of falsehood, refusing to believe anything but their own eyes. Meanwhile the obligation of the Sabbath was set at nought by them, nay, they sought to profane the day which God had hallowed, so that it should in no wise differ from other days. Therefore does God justly inveigh against them with much bitterness, for, addressing Moses, in his person He arraigns the obstinate wickedness of the whole people. Assuredly Moses was not of the number of those who had refused to obey God's laws, but by this general charge, the multitude, who had transgressed, were more severely rebuked, and a greater obligation is laid on Moses to chastise the people, when a part of the blame is transferred to him-

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self. By the expression "How long?" God implies the intolerableness of their perversity, because there is no end of their offences, but, by thus provoking greater vengeance by new crimes, they prove themselves to be incorrigible.

31. And the house of Israel called the name thereof Manna: and it *was* like coriander-seed, white; and the taste of it *was* like wafers *made* with honey.

31. Appellavit autem domus Israel nomen illius man: et erat quasi semen coriandri album, et gustus ejus quasi placenta mellita.

32. And Moses said, This *is* the thing which the Lord commandeth, Fill an omer of it, to be kept for your generations; that they may see the bread wherewith I have fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you forth from the land of Egypt.

32. Et dixit Moses, Hoc est verbum quod mandavit Jehova, Imple homer ex eo quod servetur in ætates vestras, ut videant panem quo cibavi vos in deserto, quando eduxi vos e terra Ægypti.

33. And Moses said unto Aaron, Take a pot, and put an omer full of manna therein, and lay it up before the Lord, to be kept for your generations.

33. Et ait Moses ad Aharon, Tolle urnam unam, et pone in ea homer integrum man, et repone illud coram Jehova in custodiam in ætates vestras.

34. As the Lord commanded Moses, so Aaron laid it up before the Testimony, to be kept.

34. Sicut præceperat Jehova Mosi, reposuit illud Aharon coram testimonio in custodiam.

35. And the children of Israel did eat manna forty years, until they came to a land inhabited: they did eat manna until they came unto the borders of the land of Canaan.

35. Et comederunt filii Israel man quadraginta annis, donec venissent in terram habitandam: man ipsum comederunt, donec venissent ad terminum terræ Chanaan.

36. Now an omer *is* the tenth *part* of an ephah.

36. Porro homer est decima pars epha.

31. *And the house of Israel called.* It is not without reason that Moses repeats what he had said before, that the name of Manna was given to the new kind of food which God had supplied, in order that they might be brought under condemnation for their stubborn impiety, who shall dare to raise a question on so manifest a point, since the conspicuous nature of the thing had extorted this name from people otherwise malicious and ungrateful. Its form is mentioned to prove the certainty of the miracle, viz., that its grains were round and like coriander-seed, because nothing like it had been seen before. Its taste reproves the people's ingratitude in rejecting a food which was not only appropriate and wholesome, but also very sweet in savour.

32. *And Moses said.* Moses does not proceed with the history in order, but by interposing these circumstances by

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anticipation, he the more confirms the fact that this food was then created for the people by God's special bounty, because He desired an omer of it to be preserved as a memorial, which, undergoing no putrefaction, handed down to posterity the gloriousness of the miracle. And first, he propounds generally God's command, and then, in the next verse, describes the manner in which it was done, viz., that Aaron put it in a bottle or pot, and laid it up by the Ark of the Covenant. Whence, too, it appears how high importance God would have attached to this His bounty, since he wished its memorial to exist in the sanctuary together with the tables of His covenant. The two expressions, conveying the same meaning, "before the Lord," and "before the Testimony," are used in commendation of the worship of the Law, that the people might know God's power to be near them in the sanctuary, not as if He were shut up in that place, or wished their minds to be fixed upon the visible sign, but, desiring to provide against their weakness, He in a manner descends to them, when He testified to the presence of His power by external images. He descends to them, therefore, not[1] to occupy their minds with a gross superstition, but to raise them up by degrees to spiritual worship.

CHAPTER SEVENTEENTH.

1. And all the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin, after their journeys, according to the commandment of the Lord, and pitched in Rephidim: and *there was* no water for the people to drink.

2. Wherefore the people did chide with Moses, and said, Give us water that we may drink. And Moses said unto them, Why chide ye with me? wherefore do ye tempt the Lord?

1. Deinde profectus est universus cœtus filiorum Israel e deserto Sin per turmas suas, secundum præceptum Jehova: et castrametati sunt in Raphidim, ubi non erat aqua ut biberet populus.

2. Et rixatus est populus cum Mose, ac dixerunt, Date nobis aquam ut bibamus. Dixit autem illis Moses, Quid rixamini mecum, quid tentatis Jehovam?

[1] "Non pas pour plonger leurs penseés en terre, qui eust ete une lourde superstition;" not to plunge their thoughts in earth, which would have been a gross superstition.—*Fr.*

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3. And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against Moses, and said, Wherefore *is* this *that* thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us, and our children, and our cattle, with thirst?

4. And Moses cried unto the Lord, saying, What shall I do unto this people? they be almost ready to stone me.

5. And the Lord said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go.

6. Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.

7. And he called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the Lord, saying, Is the Lord among us, or not?

3. Sitivit ergo illic populus ab aquis, et murmuravit populus contra Mosen, dicens, Quare sic nos ascendere fecisti ex Ægypto, ut interficeres me, et filios meos, et pecora mea, siti?

4. Et clamavit Moses ad Jehovam, dicendo, Quid faciam populo huic? Adhuc paululum, et lapidabunt me.

5. Et ait Jehova ad Mosen, Transi ante populum, et tolle tecum e senioribus Israel: virgam quoque tuam qua percussisti fluvium, tolle in manu tua, et incede.

6. Ecce, ego stabo coram te illic super petram quæ est in Oreb, Et tu percuties petram, egredienturque aquæ ex ea, ut bibat populus. Et fecit sic Moses coram oculis seniorum Israel.

7. Vocavitque nomen loci illius Massa et Meriba, (*vel*, tentatio et rixa) propter rixam filiorum Israel, et quia tentassent Jehovam, dicendo, Est ne in medio nostri, an non?

1. *And all the congregation.* Scarcely was the sedition of the people about the want of food set at rest when they again rebel on the subject of drink. They ought, at least, to have learnt from the manna, that as often as necessity pressed upon them, they should have humbly implored in prayer and supplication God's help, in certain hope of relief. But such was their character, that they were hurried by despair into secret murmurings and impetuous cries. We have almost a precisely similar account in Numbers xx.[1] For the error of those who think it one and the same, is easily refuted by the circumstances of the time and place; and in chap. xxxiii. it is very clearly shewn how great a distance there was between the one station and the other. Neither does the tradition of some of the Rabbins appear

[1] A brief but able reply to the arguments of those who allege these similar passages against the authenticity of the Pentateuch, will be found in Hengstenberg, (Ryland's Translation,) vol. ii. p. 310, &c.

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probable, that this thirst did not arise from natural appetite, because the manna was not only meat, but also served for drink. For there is no reason why we should be compelled to imagine this; and we gather from the text that the commencement of their murmurings arose from the fact that the water now began for the first time to fail them. But it was God's will in two ways, and at two different times, to try the minds of the Israelites, that they might more plainly shew their natural intractability. If they had required bread and water at the same time, they would have been more excusable; but after they had experienced that a sweet and wholesome kind of food was bountifully given them from heaven, because that country produced no corn, it was an act of intolerable perversity immediately to murmur against God when they had no supply of drink. Moreover, a double accusation is here brought against them, for insulting God by quarrelling and chiding with Him, and also for tempting Him. Both arose from unbelief, the cause of which was ingratitude; for it was too vile of them so soon to bury in wilful forgetfulness what God had so recently given them. He had brought them supplies when they were suffering from hunger; why do they not fly to Him when they are oppressed by thirst? It is plain, then, that the former favour was ill bestowed upon them, since it so directly vanished in their insensibility. Hence, too, appears their unbelief, because they neither expect nor ask anything of God; and with this, too, pride is conjoined, because they dare to proceed to chiding. Indeed this almost always happens, that those who neither depend on His providence nor rest on His promises, provoke God to contend with them, and rush impetuously against Him; because the brutal violence of our passions hurries us on to madness, unless we are persuaded that God will in due time be our helper, and are submissive to His will. In the beginning of the chapter Moses briefly indicates that the Israelites journeyed according to the commandment, or, as the Hebrew expresses it, "the mouth"[1] of God, as if he would praise their obedience.

[1] עַל־פִּי. Literally "*upon* the mouth." Noldius cites, however, various texts, in which it is equivalent to no more than *according to*, though in

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Whence we gather that, at the first outset, they were sufficiently disposed to their duty, until a temptation occurred, which interrupted them in the right way. By which example we are warned that, whenever we undertake anything at God's bidding, we should carefully beware that nothing should hinder our perseverance; and that none are fitted to act rightly but those who are well prepared to endure the assaults of temptation.

2. *Wherefore the people did chide with Moses.* Here now displays itself both their impiety against God, since neglecting and despising Him they make war against Moses, and also their malice and unkindness, because, forgetful of so many benefits, they wantonly insult Moses. They know that fountains and rivers cannot be created by mortal man; wherefore, then, do they quarrel with him, and not call directly upon God, in whose hand are the waters as well as all other elements? Certainly, if there had been a spark of faith in them, they would have had recourse to prayer. Rightly, then, does Moses expostulate, that in chiding with him, they tempt God Himself. What madness is there in their accusing Moses of cruelty in bringing them with him out of Egypt, that he might kill them, and their children, and cattle in the wilderness? But Moses chiefly reproves them on this ground, because God Himself is affected by this rebellious chiding. But the actual form of their tempting God is stated at the end, viz., because they had doubted "whether the Lord was among them or not?" Hence it follows, that the root of the whole evil was their unbelief; because they neither ascribed due honour to God's power nor believed Him to be true to his promises. For He had taken charge of them, and had promised that He would never fail them; why then, now, when circumstances demand it, do they not assure themselves that He will assist them, except because they wickedly detract both from His power and His truth?

4. *And Moses cried.* This cry seems not to have been conformed to the true model of prayer, but to have been

this instance, and in many others, he would render it "according to the command."—*Concord. Partic. Hebr.*— *W.*

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mixed with confused complaint, to which Moses was impelled by the deep perturbation of his mind: for excessive earnestness sometimes carries away the godly, so that they rather fret in their prayer than duly and moderately express their requests. For there is something in these words which sounds angry and obstreperous, "What shall I do unto this people?" as if Moses, struck with indignation, complained that he was weighed down with a heavy burden, which he would willingly shake off if he could obtain permission and deliverance from God. Interpreters variously expound what follows. Some thus render it, that "Unless God immediately came to his help, or should He dissemble for ever so short a time, Moses must be stoned." Some, "It is but little that they will rush upon me to stone me." Some, too, read it in the past tense, but to this the particle עוד,[1] *gnod*, which relates to the future, is an objection. I am most pleased with this sense; that if God delay His assistance but for a short time, the people's rage could not be restrained from stoning Moses.

5. *And the Lord said unto Moses.* He commands him to go out into the midst, as if He would expose him to the danger of immediate death; but because Moses is persuaded that it is in His power to calm the passion of men, however fierce, as well as the waves and storms of the sea, he neither trembles nor retreats. But thus did God magnify His power, so as to brand them with ignominy whilst He withheld the people from their previous attitude. In fact, Moses passes before them all, but he only takes the elders with him, before whom to bring the water from the rock, that they may be eye-witnesses of the miracle. This middle course, whilst it does not permit the glory of God's bounty to be obscured, still shews the multitude that they are unworthy of being admitted to behold His power. To remind him that his rod would not be inefficient, He recalls to his memory what he had already experienced; yet does He not recount all the miracles; but only adduces what we saw at first, that, by its touch, the waters of the Nile were turned into blood. The declaration of God, that He will stand upon the rock, tends

[1] Shortly.—*W.*

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to remove all hesitation, lest Moses should be anxious or doubtful as to the event; for otherwise the smiting of the rock would be vain and illusory. Moses, therefore, is encouraged to be confident; since God, whom he follows in the obedience of faith, will put forth His power by his hand, so that he should undertake nothing vainly or ineffectually. Meanwhile, although He employs the operation of His servant, still He claims to Himself the honour of the work.

7. *And he called the name of the place.* The verb here might be taken indefinitely, as if it were said, that this name was given to the place; but it is more probable that Moses, at God's command, so called the place, in order that the Israelites might be more ready to acknowledge their crime, when thus it was marked with double infamy. Although it was not only His intention to impress this feeling upon their minds, but also to hand down the memory of it to posterity. The same reproof is afterward repeated at Cades, as we shall see; because the former notice had been buried in oblivion by these foolish people. The very name of the place[1] was as much as to say that the earth itself cried out, that the people, in their perverse nature, were rebellious, and given to unbelief. Now, temptation is the mother of contentions; for as soon as anything occurs contrary to the wishes of one who distrusts God, he has recourse to murmuring and dispute. When Moses relates that the Israelites "tempted the Lord, saying, Is the Lord among us or not?" he does not mean that they openly spoke thus; but that this was the tendency of their cries, when on account of the want of water they rose against Moses, and complained that they were deceived by him, as though God had no power to help them. But though God branded the people for their malignity and perversity, with a lasting mark of ignominy, yet did He afford them an extraordinary proof of His goodness, not only in bestowing on them the drink by which their bodies might be refreshed, but by honouring their souls also with spiritual drink, as Paul testifies, (1 Cor. x. 4,) "that rock was Christ," and therefore he

[1] *Massah, i.e.*, temptation.

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compares the water which flowed from it to the cup of the holy supper. So do we see how God's immeasurable bounty surpasses all the wickedness of man, and how, by turning their vices to salvation, He brings light out of darkness; so far is He from giving them the reward of their deservings, when He confers upon them what is profitable. But we must remember the warning which is here interposed, that it availed many of them nothing to drink of that spiritual drink, because they profaned by their crimes that excellent gift.

8. Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim.

9. And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: to-morrow I will stand on the top of the hill, with the rod of God in mine hand.

10. So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek: and Moses, Aaron, and Hur, went up to the top of the hill.

11. And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed.

12. But Moses' hands *were* heavy; and they took a stone, and put *it* under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.

13. And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.

14. And the Lord said unto Moses, Write this *for* a memorial in a book, and rehearse *it* in the ears of Joshua; for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven.

15. And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it JEHOVAH-nissi:

16. For he said, Because the Lord hath sworn, *that* the Lord *will have* war with Amalek from generation to generation.

8. Venit autem Amalec et pugnavit cum Israel in Raphidim.

9. Tunc ait Moses ad Josuah, Elige nobis viros, et egrediens pugna contra Amalec: et cras ego stabo in vertice collis, et baculus Dei erit in manu mea.

10. Et fecit Josuah sicut dixerat ei Moses, pugnando cum Amalec, Moses autem et Aharon et Hur ascenderunt in verticem collis.

11. Et factum est, quum levaret Moses manum suam, prævaluit Israel, et quum demitteret manum suam, prævaluit Amalec.

12. Manus autem Mosis erant graves: itaque tulerunt lapidem et supposuerunt ei, et sedit super illum, Aharon vero et Hur sustentaverunt manus ejus, alter hinc et alter inde. Mansitque manibus suis firmis usque ad occasum solis.

13. Et fregit Josuah Amalec et populum ejus in ore gladii.

14. Tunc dixit Jehova ad Mosen, Scribe illud pro memoriali in libro, et trade auribus Josuah: quoniam delendo delebo memoriam Amalec de sub cœlo.

15. Et ædificavit Moses altare: vocavitque nomen ejus Jehova miraculum meum, (*vel*, exaltatio mea.)

16. Et dixit, Certe manus super solium Jehovæ: prælium Jehovæ cum Amalec a generatione in generationem.

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8. *Then came Amalek.* These were the first enemies whom God arrayed against Israel, after having delivered them from Egypt, and having kept them for some time in peace and quietness. It was principally for two reasons that He chose them now to be involved in war, either to punish them for their recent sin, or as a correction of their idleness, lest it should ensnare them into iniquity; for, as among soldiers sedition often arises from a cessation of labour, so also the more God spared this people and indulged them, the more did their frowardness increase. No wonder then that they were awakened by war, when they had taken occasion from their state of tranquillity to wax wanton. But some imagine that the Amalekites were impelled to take arms with this design; first, to avenge[1] the abdication of their ancestor; and secondly, because they were unwilling that the posterity of Jacob should enjoy the inheritance of which Esau, the grandfather of Amalek, the founder of their nation, had been deprived. And, certainly, it is probable that the recollection of the injury which had been inflicted on their ancestor still remained, and that they were instigated by the devil, in order that the promise of God, whereby the right of primogeniture had been transferred from Esau to Jacob, should be frustrated and fail of its effect. This might, indeed, have been their reason for the war; but God had another object, viz., to render the people more obedient to Him, by humbling their pride. Perhaps it was on that account that He withdrew Moses from the leadership, and substituted Joshua, as some token of His indignation; for although the assistance He gave them was sufficiently manifest, and their victory was obtained by

[1] Ut paternæ abdicationis ultores essent.—*Lat.* Pour venger l'opprobe de leur pere, de ce qu'il avait été desherité—*Fr.* This, *Willet in loco* paraphrases: "to revenge their father Esau's quarrel for the loss of the birthright." The Jews themselves appear to have recognised the double cause of this war, viz., the jealousy of Amalek, and the sin of Israel, referred to by *Calvin.* "After they had passed through the sea, they murmured for waters: then came against them Amalek, who hated them for the first birthright and blessing which our father Jacob had taken from Esau; and he came and fought against Israel, because they had violated the words of the law," &c.—*Targum* on Song ii. 15, quoted by Ainsworth *in loco.* For a popular account of the origin of Amalek see *Illustrated Commentary* on 1 Sam. xv.

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His grace and the prayers of Moses, yet would He have them reminded, by the absence of Moses, of their recent transgression, that, being humiliated by their fear, they might submissively ask for pardon, and fly more earnestly to Him for His aid. He orders chosen men to go forth, partly to inspirit the whole people, and encourage them to hope for victory, because He does not deign to employ the whole army to repel their enemies; and partly in consideration of the cowardice of this unwarlike mob, lest they should faint with terror if the enemies should make an incursion into the midst of their camp. For Moses does nothing of himself, but occupies the station appointed him by God on the top of the hill, to contend with the enemy from afar, but he sends down the others to fight hand to hand before him, since it had pleased God thus to order the battle. It is plain that he did not avoid the fight to spare himself, but because God had given him a different employment; and this appears from his wielding the rod of God, like their general and standard-bearer, and promising the successful issue of the battle, of which he had been assured. For that single rod was of more avail than as if they had gone into the field preceded by a thousand banners. I have already observed that this is sometimes called the rod of God, sometimes of Moses, sometimes of Aaron, according to circumstances; because God used it as an instrument to exercise His power through His ministers. So God does not detract from His own honour, when He works effectually by His ministers. It is a prelude to Joshua's future call, which we shall notice in its place, that he should be appointed commander of the troops; for he had not yet reached the dignity of next in command to Moses, unless an extraordinary commission had been given him by God.

10. *So Joshua did as.* Although Joshua is by no means backward, but diligently executes what he knows to be commanded him by God Himself, and it is probable that the soldiers whom he had taken to accompany him did their duty properly, yet is it expressly stated that they gained the victory by no care, or striving, or courage of their own, but by the prayer of Moses, by whose support their leader

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as well as the army was sustained. Yet does not Moses here boastfully commend his own zeal in praying, but is rather the public witness and proclaimer of his weakness, that the glory might be entirely attributed to the gratuitous favour of God. Nor is there any question, that, conscious of the infirmity which he afterwards confesses, he associated with him Aaron and Hur, who might assist him in his task. There[1] is more acuteness than solidity in the notion which some have, that these two men present a figure of the Old and New Testament, on which the prayers of the saints must rest; and that the stone which they gave to Moses to sit upon was offered him because our faith is only founded upon Christ. I know how plausible such allegories are; but what I have just said is enough for me, that because Moses mistrusted his own weakness, therefore he sought these two assistants. And surely when they stayed his hands they also lifted up their minds, and prayed together to God in common supplications; but Moses speaks chiefly of himself, to shew that this charge was entrusted to him by God. For he did not only offer his prayers as a work of charity, but because God had chosen him as intercessor, to conquer the enemies from afar by the stretching forth of the rod, and by his secret earnestness in prayer; and in this respect he was a type of Christ; although the similitude does not hold in all its parts. Doubtless his failure arose from his extreme earnestness, and the extraordinary vehemence of his zeal, and, therefore, praise is mixed up with blame, just as the saints, when they are stirred to make great efforts in prayer, find that not only does their vigour grow cold, but they fail from being almost consumed by their own ardour.

13. *And Joshua discomfited Amalek.* The *copula* is here used instead of the *illative particle;* for Moses here concludes that the Israelites overcame their enemies, because he

[1] "Divers allegories are made of this place: as that Moses' hands, *i.e.*, the precepts of the law are heavy, but that by Aaron, who signifieth Christ, and Hur, *i. e.*, the Holy Ghost, they are made easy and light.—*Ferus.* Some, by Moses and Hur, understand the two Testaments, upon the which our prayer must rely. Some again thus allegorize:—Aaron, they say, signifieth *montanus*, hilly, and Hur, *fire*, so two things support our prayer, high and heavenly meditation, and fervent charity.—*Lyranus*," &c.—*Willet in loco.*

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had continually persevered in prayer. There is, too, an implied *antithesis* between the firmness of his hands and the weakness of the enemy, that we may know that they were discomfited or conquered, not so much by the sword as by the uplifting of the rod, and by the intercession of the holy man.

14. *And the Lord said unto Moses.* By this command God made it known that He had performed a work which not only ought to be celebrated by word[1] of mouth, but which also was deserving of eternal glory with posterity; for therefore did He command it to be written in a book, that its memory might never perish. The dispute of commentators respecting this book seems to me to be superfluous; for God simply wills that the memorial of this circumstance should exist in all ages; and this was effected by the narration of Moses, for he handed down in writing even to the end of the world the praise of this favour, together with the perpetual and immortal doctrine of the Law. Yet God did not only wish the memorable event of this battle to be written down, but also that Joshua should be reminded of it, lest he should faint under the many difficulties which awaited him. For nothing could better support him with invincible firmness than the recollection of this history, from whence he might be assured that the people would ever be victorious under the auspices of God. But although this promise was not immediately fulfilled, yet the Amalekites were a long time afterwards totally destroyed by Saul; but it was a great encouragement to Joshua and the people to know that Amalek, who had first made war upon them, was already condemned by the divine decree, and could not escape the destruction to which he was devoted.

15. *And Moses built an altar.* The purpose of this was that not he alone, but the whole people should testify, by solemn sacrifice, their gratitude; which the very name of the altar proves. For neither did he wish to erect a statue to God, nor to honour the altar by God's name, but he shews that this was the object he proposed to himself, that the Israelites,

[1] "Par la bouche de ceux qui vivoyent alors;" by the mouth of those who were alive then.—*Fr.*

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being inflated by their good success, should not boast of their own strength, but glory only in God. I see not why some should translate it "miracle," for the word נס,[1] *nis*, is undoubtedly always rendered "banner." Yet I do not deny that the word is here used metaphorically for "exaltation;" as if Moses had said, that the God who had sustained His people was worthy only to be exalted among them.

16. *For he said, Because the Lord.*[2] He confirms by repetition the same declaration which he had lately pronounced from the mouth of God, viz., that God would be ever at war with the Amalekites, until He should have utterly destroyed them. Translators do not agree as to the meaning of the expression, "The hand is upon the throne of the Lord." Some imagine it to be a form of oath, as though God sware by His throne. Others understand by His throne the Church, which is the rest of God, in which He is said to sit. But I have no doubt but that what was said as to destroying and extinguishing the memory of Amalek is confirmed by this reason, viz., that as God is omnipotent He will contend with this wicked nation. Therefore the hand is said to be upon the throne of God, because he does not sit idly in heaven, (as the Epicureans imagine,) but exercises His dominion in the government of the world, as if He had said, that God, who rules in power, and who by His hand and authority controls and moderates, sustains and overthrows all things, as long as He shall reign upon His throne, endued with supreme and formidable might, will never cease to pursue the Amalekites with His just vengeance. And, indeed, it may have been the case, that He inflicted divers punishments upon them, though their last great overthrow was delayed till the days of Saul.

[1] It was in *S. M.'s* version that *C.* found this clause rendered Dominus miraculum meum; and *Munster* cites *Onkelos*, the Chaldee paraphrast, as his authority for so translating the word נס; but the text of that paraphrase, as given in *Elias Hutter's Heptateuch*, does not justify this singular rendering.—*W.*

[2] "Truly the hand is upon the throne of Jehovah."—*Lat.* Margin, *A. V.*, "Because the hand *of Amalek* is against the throne of the Lord, *therefore*," &c. *Heb.*, "The hand upon the throne of the Lord." Holden agrees with Rosenmüller, and, as he says, the most eminent Biblical critics, in preferring the explanation of the margin, *A. V.*

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CHAPTER EIGHTEENTH.

1. When Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses' father-in-law, heard of all that God had done for Moses, and for Israel his people, *and* that the Lord had brought Israel out of Egypt;

2. Then Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, took Zipporah, Moses' wife, after he had sent her back,

3. And her two sons; of which the name of the one *was* Gershom; for he said, I have been an alien in a strange land:

4. And the name of the other *was* Eliezer; for the God of my father, *said he, was* mine help, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh.

5. And Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, came with his sons and his wife unto Moses into the wilderness, where he encamped at the mount of God:

6. And he said unto Moses, I thy father-in-law Jethro am come unto thee, and thy wife, and her two sons with her.

7. And Moses went out to meet his father-in-law, and did obeisance, and kissed him; and they asked each other of *their* welfare: and they came into the tent.

8. And Moses told his father-in-law all that the Lord had done unto Pharaoh, and to the Egyptians, for Israel's sake, *and* all the travail that had come upon them by the way, and *how* the Lord delivered them.

9. And Jethro rejoiced for all the goodness which the Lord had done to Israel, whom he had delivered out of the hand of the Egyptians.

10. And Jethro said, Blessed *be* the Lord, who hath delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of Pharaoh; who hath delivered the people from under the hand of the Egyptians.

11. Now I know that the Lord *is* greater than all gods: for in the

1. Audivit autem Jethro sacerdos Midian, socer Mosis, omnia quæ fecerat Jehova Mosi, et Israeli populo suo: nempe quod eduxisset Jehova Israelem ex Ægypto.

2. Tulit ergo Jethro socer Mosis uxorem Mosis, postquam miserat eam,

3. Duos quoque filios ejus: quorum nomen unius erat Gerson: quia dixerat, Peregrinus fui in terra aliena.

4. Nomen vero secundi Eliezer: quia Deus patris mei in auxilium meum, et eripuit me gladio Pharaonis.

5. Venit itaque Jethro socer Mosis, et filii ejus, et uxor ejus ad Mosen in desertum, ubi castra fixerat prope montem Dei.

6. Et dixit ad Mosen, Ego socer tuus Jethro venio ad te, et uxor tua, et duo filii ejus cum ea.

7. Egressus autem Moses in occursum soceri sui, incurvavit se atque osculatus est eum: et interrogavit alter alterum de pace, veneruntque in tabernaculum.

8. Et narravit Moses socero suo quæcunque fecerat Jehova Pharaoni et Ægyptiis propter Israel, et omnem molestiam quæ invenerat eos in itinere, unde liberaverat eos Jehova.

9. Et lætatus est Jethro, super omni beneficentia quam exercuerat Jehova erga Israelem qui liberaverat eum e manu Pharaonis.

10. Et ait Jethro, Benedictus Jehova, qui liberavit vos e manu Ægyptiorum, et e manu Pharaonis, qui liberavit populum e subjectione manus Ægyptiorum.

11. Nunc cognosco quod magnus Jehova præ omnibus diis: quia se-

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thing wherein they dealt proudly *he was* above them.

12. And Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, took a burnt-offering and sacrifices for God: and Aaron came, and all the elders of Israel, to eat bread with Moses' father-in-law before God.

cundum rationem qua superbe egerunt contra eos.

12. Et accepit Jethro socer Mosis holocaustum et sacrificia ad Deum. Venitque Aharon et omnes seniores Israel ad comedendum panem cum socero Mosis coram Deo.

1. *When Jethro, the priest of Midian.* This chapter consists of two parts. First of all, the arrival of Jethro in the camp is related, and his congratulation of Moses on account of the prosperity of his enterprise, together with the praise and sacrifice rendered to God. Secondly, his proposed form of government for the people is set forth, in consequence of which judges and rulers were chosen, lest Moses should sink under his heavy task. The greater number of commentators think that Zipporah, having been enraged on account of her son's circumcision, had turned back on their journey, and gone to live with her father; but to me this does not seem probable. For Moses would never have allowed his sons to be deprived of the redemption of which he was the minister; nor would it have been consistent that they should afterwards be appointed priests, of whom God was not the Redeemer. Besides, if he had deposited his wife and children in safety, and had advanced alone to the contest, he would have been deservedly suspected of deceit, or of excessive cowardice. Wherefore I have no doubt but that he underwent, together with his family, that miserable yoke of bondage by which they were long oppressed, and by this proof evidenced his faithfulness, so that greater authority might attend his vocation. The statement, then, in the second verse, "after he had sent her back," I apply to Moses, because he had sent back his wife from the wilderness to visit her father, either having yielded to the desire which was natural to her as a woman, or, induced by his own feelings of piety, he had wished to shew respect in this way to an old man nearly connected with him. There is something forced and cold in the words, which some would supply, "after he had sent back *gifts*." The text runs very well thus, After Moses had sent back his wife, she was brought

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again by his father-in-law, thus returning and repaying his kindness.

3. *And her two sons.* It was remarked in its proper place, how distinguished a proof not only of faith, but of magnanimity and firmness Moses had manifested in giving these names to his sons. For we cannot doubt but that he brought on himself the ill-will of his connections, as if he despised the country of his wife, by calling the one (Gershom) "a strange land;" and the name of his son continually cried out, that though he inhabited Midian, yet was he an alien in his heart, and though sojourning for a time, would afterwards seek another habitation. Whence also we may conjecture that he took them with him into Egypt, rather than banish from him these two pledges of his piety on account of the sudden anger and reproaches of his wife; since by their names he was daily reminded that God's covenant was to be preferred to all earthly advantages.

5. *And Jethro, Moses' father-in-law.* It was not so much love for Moses as the fame of the miracles which drew this old man,[1] bowed down with age, from his home into the wilderness; for it will hereafter appear from the context, that he was not induced by ambition; because, after he had offered sacrifice to God, and, in solemn thanksgiving, had testified that he ascribed all the glory to God alone, he returned home again with the same simplicity in which he had come. Moses, too, at the beginning of the chapter, has stated the cause of his coming, for he does not say that he had heard of the arrival of his son-in-law, but how wonderful had been God's goodness and power in delivering Moses and the people. He desired, therefore, to be in some measure a spectator of the things whereof he had heard, and not to neglect, by remaining at home, such illustrious instances of God's bounty. I have already explained why Mount Horeb is distinguished by the name of "the Mount of God." The vision, indeed, which had been already vouchsafed to Moses there, rendered it worthy of this honourable title; but here, as before, there is reference made rather to the

[1] "Ce bon veillard;" this good old man.—*Fr.*

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promulgation of the Law, whereby God consecrated the mountain to Himself.

7. *And Moses went out.* In the foregoing verse he had related what happened last, viz., that Jethro said, I am come, and have brought to thee thy wife and children; but this transposition is common in Hebrew. Now, then, he adds, that Moses went to meet him, and to pay him honour; and that they met each other with mutual kindness, and respectively performed the duties of affection. "To ask each other of their peace,"[1] is tantamount to inquiring whether things were well and prospering. But the main point is, that Moses told him how gracious God had been to His people; for this was the drift of the whole of his address, that, when he had left his father-in-law, he had not yielded to the impulse of lightness, but had obeyed the call of God, as had afterwards been proved by His extraordinary aids and by heavenly prodigies.

10. *And Jethro said, Blessed.* Hence it appears that although the worship of God was then everywhere profaned by strange additions, yet Jethro was not so devoted to superstition as not to acknowledge and honour the true God. Nevertheless, the comparison which he subjoins, that "Jehovah is greater than all gods," implies that he was not pure and free from all error. For, although the Prophets often so speak, it is with a different import; for sometimes God is exalted above the angels, that His sole eminence may appear, every heavenly dignity being reduced to its due order; sometimes, too, He is improperly called "Greater," not as if the false gods had any rank, but that the greatness which is falsely and foolishly attributed to them in the world may be brought to nought. But Jethro here imagines, in accordance with the common notion, that a multitude of inferior gods are in subordination to the Most High. Thus, where the pure truth of God does not shine, religion is never uncorrupt and clear, but always has some dregs mixed with it. At the same time, Jethro seems to have made some advance; for in affirming that he now knows the power of God, he implies that he was more rightly informed than before;

[1] So in margin *A. V.*

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unless, perhaps, it might be preferred to understand this of the experimental knowledge, which confirms even believers, so that they more willingly submit themselves to God, whom they already knew before. Meanwhile, there is no doubt that by the name of Jehovah he designates the God of Israel; for, although they boasted everywhere that they worshipped the eternal God, yet by asserting the true Deity of the One God, he puts all others beneath Him. At any rate he confesses that, by the history of their deliverance, he was assured of the immense power of God, who had manifested himself in Israel; so as to despise, in comparison with Him, whatever gods were honoured elsewhere in the world. The latter clause[1] of verse (11) is unfinished; for it stands thus, "According to the word (or reason) wherein they dealt proudly against them;" thus the principal verb is wanting to express that God repaid the Egyptians the just wages of their cruelty; just as He denounces "judgment without mercy," upon all who proudly and unmercifully mistreat their neighbours, (James ii. 13,) according to the declaration of our Lord Jesus Christ, "With what measure ye mete," &c. (Matt. vii. 2.) The exposition which some give seems too limited, viz., that the Egyptians, who had drowned the infants in the river, were themselves drowned in the Red Sea. I prefer, then, to extend it to every instance of punishment which they received.

12. *And Jethro.* Although I do not think that Jethro had previously sacrificed to idols, yet, because he worshipped an unknown God, with but a confused and clouded faith, it appears that this was his first sincere and legitimate sacrifice since the God of Israel had been more clearly known to him. We may gather from hence that it was duly offered, because Moses, and Aaron, and the elders openly professed themselves his companions, and partook with him; for it is not merely said that they came to eat bread with him, but "be-

[1] *S. M.* has rendered this clause, In re qua insolenter egerunt contra illos [perierunt]; and in his note he says, "Hoc est, remensus est illis ea mensura qua ipsi mensi fuerunt Israelitis." They drowned the little ones of Israel in the water, and they also perished in the waters. Thus Abraham Sepharadi expounds this passage:—"Alii sic exponunt; Propterea quod superbe egerunt contra eos, voluit quoque Deus se magnificum ostendere contra Ægyptios."—*W.*

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fore God ;" which expression describes a sacred and solemn feast, a part and adjunct of the offering and divine worship. But they never would have willingly polluted themselves with the defilements of the Gentiles for the sake of gratifying an unholy man. It follows, then, that this was a token of his piety, since they did not hesitate to become partakers with him. We ought, indeed, to have God before our eyes, as often as we partake of his bounty ; but we shall hereafter see, that this expression is peculiarly applied to sacrifices, wherein the faithful put themselves in the presence of God. Yet do I not admit that Jethro slew the victims in right of the priesthood which he exercised in the land of Midian ; but because there was more liberty, as will be explained in its place, before the Law was prescribed by God. It is my decided opinion that by the word " bread," the manna is incontestably meant.

13. And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses sat to judge the people: and the people stood by Moses from the morning unto the evening.

14. And when Moses' father-in-law saw all that he did to the people, he said, What *is* this thing that thou doest to the people? why sittest thou thyself alone, and all the people stand by thee from morning unto even?

15. And Moses said unto his father-in-law, Because the people come unto me to enquire of God.

16. When they have a matter, they come unto me; and I judge between one and another, and I do make *them* know the statutes of God, and his laws.

17. And Moses' father-in-law said unto him, The thing that thou doest *is* not good.

18. Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou and this people that *is* with thee; for this thing *is* too heavy for thee; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone.

19. Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee: Be thou for the

13. Accidit autem postridie ut sederet Moses ad judicandum populum: stabatque populus juxta Mosen a mane usque ad vesperum.

14. Et videns socer Mosis omnia quæ faciebat ipse erga populum, dixit, Quid est quod tu facis populo? quare tu sedes solus, et universus populus stat juxta te a mane usque ad vesperum.

15. Et respondit Moses socero suo, Quia venit populus ad me ad quærendum Deum.

16. Quum est illis negotium, veniunt ad me, et ego judico inter quemque et proximum ejus, et ostendo statuta Dei et leges ejus.

17. Tunc dixit socer Mosis ad eum, Non est bonum quod tu facis.

18. Deficiendo deficies tam tu quam populus iste qui tecum est: Nam hæc res gravis est supra tuas vires: non poteris ergo præstare solus.

19. Nunc audi vocem meam: consilium tibi dabo, et erit Deus tecum. Esto tu pro populo co-

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people to God-ward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God;

20. And thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt shew them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do.

21. Moreover, thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness, and place *such* over them, *to be* rulers of thousands, *and* rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.

22. And let them judge the people at all seasons: and it shall be, *that* every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge: so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear *the burden* with thee.

23. If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee *so*, then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people shall also go to their place in peace.

24. So Moses hearkened to the voice of his father-in-law, and did all that he had said.

25. And Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.

26. And they judged the people at all seasons: the hard causes they brought unto Moses, but every small matter they judged themselves.

27. And Moses let his father-in-law depart; and he went his way into his own land.

ram Deo, ut referas causas ad Deum.

20. Docebisque eos statuta et leges, et ostendes eis viam in qua ambulent, et opus quod faciant.

21. Tu autem deliges ex toto populo viros fortes, timentes Deum, viros veraces, qui oderint avaritiam: præficiesque eis tribunos, centuriones, quinquagenarios, et decanos.

22. Qui judicent populum omni tempore: si autem acciderit negotium magnum, ad te referent, omnem vero leviorem causam judicabunt ipsi: et tibi levius erit onus, quia sufferent ipsi tecum.

23. Si hoc feceris, et præceperit tibi Deus, poteris stare: atque etiam populus hic ad locum suum veniet in pace.

24. Obedivit Moses voci soceri sui: et fecit omnia quæ ille dixerat.

25. Et elegit Moses viros fortes ex toto Israel, et constituit eos capita super populum, principes super mille centuriones, quinquagenarios, ac decanos.

26. Qui judicabant populum omni tempore, ardua referebant ad Mosen: omnem vero rem parvam judicabant ipsi.

27. Dimisit autem Moses socerum suum, et abiit ad terram suam.

13. *And it came to pass.* A memorable circumstance, and one well worth knowing, is here introduced. In that form of government over which God presided, and which He honoured with extraordinary manifestations of His glory, there was something deserving of reprehension, which Jethro corrected; and again, Moses himself, the mighty Prophet, and with whom alone God was thus familiar, was deservedly reproved for inconsiderately wearing away both himself and the people by excessive labour. It was a proof of his illus-

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trious virtue and mental heroism to undergo so many troubles, to endure so much fatigue, and not to be subdued by weariness from daily exposing himself to new toils. It betrayed also a magnanimity never sufficiently to be praised, that he should occupy himself gratuitously for this perverse and wicked people, and never desist from his purpose, although he experienced an unworthy return for his kind efforts. For we have seen him to have been often assailed by reproaches and contumelies, and assaulted by chidings and threats; so that it is more than marvellous that his patience, so constantly abused, was not altogether worn out. In this, assuredly, many virtues will be discovered worthy of the highest praise; yet Jethro in these very praises finds occasion of fault. Whence we are warned that in all the most excellent acts of men some defect is ever lurking, and that scarcely any exists so perfect in every respect as to be free from any stain. Let all those, then, who are called on to be rulers of mankind know, that however diligently they may exercise their office, something still may be wanting, if the best plan that they adopt be brought to examination. Therefore let all, whether kings or magistrates, or pastors of the Church, know, that whilst they strain every nerve to fulfil their duties, something will always remain which may admit of correction and improvement. Here, too, it is worth while to remark, that no single mortal can be sufficient to do everything, however many and various may be the endowments wherein he excels. For who shall equal Moses, whom we have still seen to be unequal to the burden, when he undertook the whole care of governing the people? Let, then, God's servants learn to measure carefully their powers, lest they should wear out, by ambitiously embracing too many occupations. For this propensity to engage in too many things (πολυπραγμοσύνη) is a very common malady, and numbers are so carried away by it as not to be easily restrained. In order, therefore, that every one should confine himself within his own bounds, let us learn that in the human race God has so arranged our condition, that individuals are only endued with a certain measure of gifts, on which the distribution of

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offices depends. For as one ray of the sun does not illuminate the world, but all combine their operations as it were in one; so God, that He may retain men by a sacred and indissoluble bond in mutual society and good-will, unites one to another by variously dispensing His gifts, and not raising up any out of measure by his entire perfection. Therefore Augustine[1] truly says that God humbled His servant by this act; just as Paul reports, that buffetings were inflicted on him by the messenger of Satan, lest the grandeur of his revelations should exalt him too highly. (2 Cor. xii. 7.)

15. *And Moses said unto his father-in-law.* Moses replies ingenuously, as if on a very praiseworthy matter, like one unconscious of any fault; for he declared himself to be the minister of God, and the organ of His Spirit. Nor, indeed, could his faithfulness and integrity be called in question. He only erred in overwhelming himself with too much labour, and not considering himself privately, nor all the rest publicly. Yet a useful lesson may be gathered from his words. He says that disputants come "to inquire of God," and that he makes them to know the statutes of God and His laws. Hence it follows that this is the object of political government, that God's tribunal should be erected on earth, wherein He may exercise the judge's office, to the end that judges and magistrates should not arrogate to themselves a power uncontrolled by any laws, nor allow themselves to decide anything arbitrarily or wantonly, nor, in a word, assume to themselves what belongs to God. Then, and then only, will magistrates acquit themselves properly, when they remember that they are the representatives (*vicarios*) of God. An obligation is here also imposed upon all private individuals, that they should not rashly appeal to the authority or assistance of judges, but should approach them with pure hearts, as if inquiring of God; for whosoever desires anything else except to learn from the mouth of the magistrate what is right and just, boldly and sacrilegiously violates the place which is dedicated to God.

[1] "Videndum etiam, ne forte ibi voluerit Deus ab alienigena admoneri Moysen, ubi et ipsum posset tentare superbia," &c.—*Augustin. Quæst. in Ex.*, vol. iii. pt. 1, p. 442. A.

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17. *And Moses' father-in-law said.* He does not absolutely condemn the whole system which Moses had before adopted, after the manner of morose, or froward, or ambitious men who, by carping at some trifle, obscure the noble deeds of others; but by seeking only to correct a part of it, he detracts not from the just praise of Moses, and leaves the power which God had conferred upon him untouched. Herein his moderation is worth observing, for he does not abuse this pretext of a particular error, so as to upset the due order of things; but only advises Moses how he may usefully execute the office which God had conferred upon him.

19. *I will give thee counsel.* Jethro dares, indeed, to promise success, if Moses will obey his counsel; yet does he not proudly boast that this will be the fruit of his own prudence, but ascribes it to God's blessing and grace, if he prospers even when nothing is established but on the best system. For this is the import of the expression, that a counsel occurs to him, which if Moses follows, God shall bless him. Nor yet does he reprove Moses, as if God had not been thus far with his pious zeal and industry, but rather hints that God is the author of this counsel, which He will follow up with His grace. In sum, he does not state it to be his object to diminish in the smallest degree the grace which Moses had already experienced; but to point out a plan, of which God will, by its result, shew His approbation. Then follows the other point to which I have alluded, viz., that he does not rob Moses of his authority, so as to overturn his call from God, but rather by exhorting him to proceed, desires that what God has once ordained should be firm and inviolable. It is well also for us diligently to consider that counsel be taken according to circumstances and expediency, so that there be no departure from the ordinance of God; because it is sinful to entertain the question whether we should obey God or not. Accursed, then, are the deliberations wherein it is proposed to alter anything in God's Word, or to withdraw ourselves from the bounds of our calling. We have said that the burden whereby Moses was weighed down was not of God's imposing; but only had he been set over the people as their leader, as far as his ability

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permitted. Jethro leaves this unaffected, and thus confirms by subscribing, as it were, to the decree of heaven. Because he was chosen to be as an interpreter, and God familiarly admitted him as the mediator between Him and His people, Jethro enjoins him to continue in the discharge of these duties. But because the possession of the supreme government did not interfere with the duty of a Prophet, he desired also the greater matters to be referred to him; for I so interpret the expressions, that Moses was to be "to Godward," for the delivery of the rule of piety, and for the performance of the prophetical office, whilst the weightier causes were to be referred by the rulers to him, that every one might have justice done him.

21. *Moreover, thou shalt*[1] *provide out of all the people.* Literally so, "thou shalt provide;" meaning, thou shalt choose out, and take the most worthy, so that such an office be not entrusted rashly to any one that offers. But this was most reasonable, among a free people, that the judges should not be chosen for their wealth or rank, but for their superiority in virtue. Yet although it be right that regard should be chiefly had to virtue, so that if any one of the lower orders be found more suitable than others, he should be preferred to the noble or the rich; still should any one choose to lay this down as a perpetual and necessary rule, he will be justly accounted contentious. Jethro enumerates from qualifications which must be principally regarded in the appointment of judges, viz., ability in business, the fear of God, integrity, and the contempt of riches, not to exclude others whereof, as we shall soon see, mention is made in the first chapter of Deuteronomy, but to signify that all are not qualified, nay, that extraordinary virtues are required which, by *synecdoche*, he embraces in these four. The words which we translate "brave men,"[2] (*viros fortes,*) are, in the Hebrew, "men of bravery," (*viros fortitudinis;*) by which title some think that strong and laborious men are described. But in my opinion, Moses rather designates strenuous and coura-

[1] Thou shalt choose.—*Lat.*

[2] אנשי חיל, Men of might. It is *S. M.* who thinks the words to mean "Strong and hardy men, capable of bearing fatigue." Ἀνδρας δυνατους, LXX.—*W.*

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geous persons, whom he opposes not only to the inactive, but to the timid and cowardly also. But because vigour of mind as well as of body is but frail without the fear of God, he adds piety in the second place, in that they should exercise their office as having an account to render to God. "Truth" is opposed not only to deception and gross falsehoods, but to popularity-hunting, flattering promises, and other crooked arts, which tend to corrupt justice. Lastly, hatred of covetousness is demanded; because nothing is more antagonistic to justice than eagerness for gain; and since snares are so constantly set for judges by the offers of pecuniary advantage, they would not be duly fortified against this mode of corruption, unless they earnestly detested avarice.

23. *If thou shalt do this thing.* What immediately follows, "and God command thee so," may be taken in connection with the beginning of the verse, as if, in self-correction, Jethro made the limitation, that he did not wish his counsel to be obeyed, unless God should approve of it. Others extend it more widely, that if Moses followed God's commands in all things, this moderation of his duties would be useful. However you take it, Jethro declares that he would have nothing conceded to him, which should derogate from God's supreme authority; but that there was nothing to prevent Moses from following, as he had done, God as his leader, and still adopting the proposed plan. Yet he signifies that this was to be but temporary, when he adds, that the people should go in peace or prosperously into the land of Canaan. Jethro, then, had no wish to establish a law for posterity; but points out a remedy for present inconveniences, and a provisional arrangement,[1] until the people should obtain a peaceful resting-place.

24. *So Moses hearkened.* Here is a remarkable instance of modesty, that Moses is not indisposed to submit himself to the counsel of his father-in-law. For although Jethro

[1] There is an obscurity here in the Latin, which I have not been able to remove. The words are, "atque (ut vulgo loquitur) modum promissionis ostendit." The common language to which *C.* alludes may probably be that of the ancient grammarians. The *Fr.* is "par maniere de provision, (comme on dit.)"

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was his superior in age and in degree of affinity, in other respects he was far inferior to him. This yielding, then, of Moses to his authority, lays down a rule for all the greatest and most excellent Doctors, that they should not refuse to receive the admonitions of those whom they admit to teach rightly, although they are not of such high dignity. For Cyprian[1] truly declares that none is a good doctor who is not also docile. It is probable that the old man immediately returned home, not in contempt, or from his dislike to labour or fatigue, but[2] on account of his age; but we shall hereafter see in its proper place that his son remained in the camp.

FROM DEUTERONOMY, CHAPTER FIRST.

A REPETITION OF THE SAME HISTORY.

9. And I spake unto you at that time, saying, I am not able to bear you myself alone:

10. The Lord your God hath multiplied you, and, behold, ye *are* this day as the stars of heaven for multitude.

11. (The Lord God of your fathers make you a thousand times so many more as ye *are*, and bless you, as he hath promised you!)

12. How can I myself alone bear your cumbrance, and your burden, and your strife?

13. Take you wise men, and understanding, and known among your tribes, and I will make them rulers over you.

14. And ye answered me, and said, The thing which thou hast spoken *is* good *for us* to do.

15. So I took the chief of your tribes, wise men, and known, and made them heads over you, captains

9. Dixi vobis in tempore illo, dicendo, Non possum solus ferre vos.

10. Jehova Deus vester multiplicavit vos, ita ut sitis hodie sicut stellæ cœli in multitudine.

11. Jehova Deus patrum vestrorum addat super vos sicut estis, mille vicibus, et benedicat vobis quemadmodum loquutus est vobis.

12. Quomodo feram solus laborem vestrum, et onus vestrum, et lites vestras.

13. Date ex vobis viros sapientes et intelligentes, et peritos e tribubus vestris, ut præficiam illos vobis.

14. Et respondistis mihi atque dixistis, Bona res est quam dixisti ut faciamus.

15. Tulique principes tribuum vestrarum, viros sapientes et peritos, ac constitui eos principes super vos,

[1] "Et ideo vir sanctus Cyprianus, (Ep. lxxiv. 12, ad Pompeium,) non solum doctus, sed etiam docibilis, quod in laude episcopi quem designat Apostolus sic intellexit ipse ut diceret: 'etiam hoc in episcopo diligendum, ut non solum scienter doceat, sed etiam patienter discat.'"—*Aug. contra Donat.*, lib. iv. 7, vol. ix. 125.

[2] "Mais il est vray-semblable, que Moyse l'a volontiers excusè pour sa vieillesse;" but it is probable that Moses voluntarily excused him on account of his old age.—*Fr.*

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over thousands, and captains over hundreds, and captains over fifties, and captains over tens, and officers among your tribes.

16. And I charged your judges at that time, saying, Hear *the causes* between your brethren, and judge righteously between *every* man and his brother, and the stranger *that is* with him.

17. Ye shall not respect persons in judgment, *but* ye shall hear the small as well as the great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man; for the judgment *is* God's: and the cause that is too hard for you, bring *it* unto me, and I will hear it.

18. And I commanded you at that time all the things which ye should do.

tribunos, et centuriones, et quinquagenarios, et decuriones, et præfectos tribubus vestris.

16. Atque præcepi judicibus vestris tempore illo, dicendo, Audite inter fratres vestros, et judicate juste inter virum et fratrem suum, et inter peregrinum ejus.

17. Non agnoscetis faciem in ipso judicio: sicut parvum, sic et magnum audietis: non timebitis a facie cujusquam, quia judicium Dei est: rem autem quæ gravior erit vobis, referetis ad me, et audiam illam.

18. Præcepique vobis tempore illo omnia quæ facere deberetis.

9. *And I spake unto you at that time.* He does not here say that the counsel was suggested to him from another quarter, as to the appointment of the judges; but, perhaps, he dared not mention any name to these proud and perverse people, lest they should reject the thing which was otherwise good, from dislike of its author, as a foreigner. No doubt he is here recounting what had before happened; therefore he confesses himself, from his own personal feelings, unequal to bearing the burden, if he alone is set over the whole people. He adduces as the cause the immense multitude amongst whom there must necessarily arise many strifes and controversies. As to what he says of their increase, the commencement of its period must not be taken from the Exodus, but he commemorates the extraordinary and incredible favour of God, because they had so largely multiplied under the cruel tyranny when they were doomed to total destruction; and he adds a prayer, that for the future also the same blessing may attend them. Yet in these words he reminds them that the burden of government would become daily more arduous and weighty; whereby he may more readily persuade them to provide at once for what could not be eventually avoided.

13. *Take you wise men.* Hence it more plainly appears that those who were to preside in judgment were not

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appointed only by the will of Moses, but elected by the votes of the people. And this is the most desirable kind of liberty, that we should not be compelled to obey every person who may be tyrannically put over our heads; but which allows of election, so that no one should rule except he be approved of by us. And this is further confirmed in the next verse, wherein Moses recounts that he awaited the consent of the people, and that nothing was attempted which did not please them all. Again, he does not here mention the same virtues as in Exod. xviii.; but only distinguishes the judges by three qualifications, viz., that they should be wise, and understanding, and experienced, all of which are comprised under one head, that they should possess acuteness of intellect and prudence, confirmed by experience and practice; for neither the greatest probity nor diligence would be sufficient for the office of ruler, apart from skill and sagacity.[1] But the first epithet which the Hebrews often apply in a bad sense to the crafty and deceitful, here means acute and perspicacious. The second I explain as pointing out prudent persons, endued with sound judgment and discretion.[2] The third may be taken either actively or passively; some therefore translate it known or tried; but here the active sense is most suitable. Thus, then, experience and acquaintance with business is required in judges; because none but the practised are competent for the management of business.

16. *And I charged your judges.* This charge is not found in Exodus xviii., where the only object of Moses was to point out the origin of the alteration; but now omitting the praise of his father-in-law, he merely recalls to the recollection of the Israelites what he did with them. The sum, however, of the exhortation is, that they should adjudicate impartially between their brethren; which is more fully expressed in the next verse, where they are forbidden to

[1] חכמים, wise men. *C.* had already said in his Commentary on Exodus i. 10, that the Hebrews often used this epithet in an ill sense, but the assertion is scarcely tenable.—*W.*

[2] ידעים. The third characteristic can only be said to be ambiguous by such as reject the authority of the Hebrew points. The translators who admit that authority must hold this participle to be passive; and therefore our *A. V.* renders the clause, *known among your tribes.*—*W.*

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"acknowledge faces."[1] For there can be no greater corruption than to judge from personal appearance, which always draws away men's minds from the merits of the case. Wherefore Christ rightly opposes these two things to one another, to "judge righteous judgment," and "according to the appearance." (John vii. 24.) This even philosophers have perceived, when they have advised that, as far as possible, judges should be restrained by fixed laws, lest, being left free, they should be swayed this way or that by favour or ill will. And, in point of fact, wherever there is a sufficient capacity of intellect, equity and rectitude will prevail, unless respect to persons influences the judge. It is plain from the context, where Moses forbids the making a distinction between small and great, what is meant by "acknowledging persons." But although judges often inflict injury upon the poor and wretched out of contempt of them, yet Moses adverts to the more common fault, when he charges them "to be afraid of no man;" since it very often happens that those who are otherwise just, and disposed to study what is equitable and right, are made to swerve through fear of the threats of the powerful, and dare not manfully encounter their ill will. Moses, therefore, requires magnanimity in judges, so that they may not hesitate to bring upon themselves the hatred of any, in their defence of a good cause. But we must specially observe the reason whereby he corrects their fear and alarm; for he says that they are to be afraid of no mortal man, because "the judgment is God's." He does not here merely remind them, as it appears to some, that an account must be rendered to God; but shews how absurd it is to turn from the right course out of the fear of man, because thus the majesty of God is prostituted and exposed to scorn; as much as to say that this honour must be paid to God, whose representatives they are, that they should look upon all men as beneath them, and restrain the audacity of the wicked with such inflexible magnanimity, that God alone may have the pre-eminence. The same is the object of Jehoshaphat's words: "Take heed what ye do: for ye judge not for man but for the

[1] So margin *A. V.*

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Lord." (2 Chron. xix. 6.) If this were thoroughly impressed upon the minds both of magistrates and pastors, they would not vacillate so often; for relying on God's aid, they would stand firmly against all the terrors by which they are so pitifully agitated. Wherefore let all those who are called to any public office, sustain themselves by this doctrine, that they are doing God's work, who is well able to keep them safe from the violence as well as the craftiness of the whole world. Yet, at the same time we are taught by these words that all posts of command are sacred to God, so that whosoever are called to them should reverently and diligently serve God, and ever reflect that His is the dominion whereof they are the ministers.

EXODUS, CHAPTER NINETEENTH.

1. In the third month, when the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came they *into* the wilderness of Sinai.

2. For they were departed from Rephidim, and were come *to* the desert of Sinai, and had pitched in the wilderness: and there Israel camped before the mount.

3. And Moses went up unto God, and the Lord called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel;

4. Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and *how* I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself.

5. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people; for all the earth *is* mine.

6. And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These *are* the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

7. And Moses came, and called for the elders of the people, and laid

1. In mense tertio postquam egressi erant filii Israel e terra Ægypti, ipso die venerunt in desertum Sinai.

2. Profecti ergo e Raphidim venerunt in desertum Sinai, et castrametati sunt in deserto: mansitque illic Israel e regione montis.

3. Moses autem ascendit ad Deum, et vocavit eum Jehova e monte, dicendo, Sic dices domui Jacob, et annuntiabis filiis Israel.

4. Vos vidistis quæ feci Ægyptiis, et ut portaverim vos quasi super alas aquilarum, et adduxerim vos ad me.

5. Nunc ergo si obediendo obedieritis voci meæ, et custodieritis pactum meum, eritis mihi in peculium (*vel*, thesaurum) præ omnibus populis, quia mea est (*vel*, quamvis mea sit) universa terra.

6. Et vos eritis mihi regnum sacerdotale, et gens sancta. Hæc sunt verba quæ loqueris ad filios Israel.

7. Venit itaque Moses, et vocavit seniores populi, et protulit coram

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before their faces all these words which the Lord commanded him.

8. And all the people answered together, and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the Lord.

ipsis omnes hos sermones quos præceperat ei Jehova.

8. Responderunt autem omnis populus pariter, et dixerunt, Quicquid dixit Jehova faciemus. Et retulit Moses verba populi ad Jehovam.

1. *In the third month.* This chapter informs us by what means God rendered the people attentive and teachable when He would promulgate His laws. He had, indeed, previously delivered the rule of a just and pious life, but by writing the Law on tables, and by then adding its exposition, He not only embraced the perfect doctrine of piety and righteousness, but ratified it by a solemn rite, so that the recognition of it might remain and flourish in future times. And this is the main and principal thing which the prophets celebrate in the redemption of the people; and in this, as in a mirror, propose for consideration the image of the renewed Church, that God made known His testimonies to His redeemed, and bound the people, whom He had purchased, to Himself by a new covenant. He had indeed made with Abraham an eternal, and inviolable covenant; but because it had grown into disregard from the lapse of time, and the carelessness of mankind, it became needful that it should be again renewed. To this end, then, it was engraved upon the tables of stone, and written in a book, that the marvellous grace, which God had conferred on the race of Abraham, should never sink into oblivion. But in the first place we must observe that, although the Law is a testimony of God's gratuitous adoption, and teaches that salvation is based upon His mercy, and invites men to call upon God with sure confidence, yet it has this peculiar property, that it covenants conditionally. Therefore it is worth while to distinguish between the general doctrine, which was delivered by Moses, and the special command which he received. Moses everywhere exhorts men, by holding forth the hope of pardon, to reconcile themselves to God; and, whenever he prescribes expiatory rites, he doubtless encourages miserable sinners to have a good hope, and bears witness that God will be merciful to them. Meanwhile this office was separately imposed upon him, to demand perfect righteousness of the people, and to

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promise them a reward, as if by compact, upon no other condition than that they should fulfil whatever was enjoined them, but to threaten and to denounce vengeance against them if ever they wandered from the way. It is certain indeed that the same covenant, of which Abraham had been the minister and keeper, was repeated to his descendants by the instrumentality of Moses; and yet Paul declares, that the Law "was added because of transgressions," (Gal. iii. 19,) and opposes it to the promise given to Abraham; because, as he is treating of the peculiar office, power, and end of the Law, he separates it from the promises of grace. With the same import, he elsewhere calls it "the ministration of death," and "the letter that killeth." (2 Cor. iii. 6, 7.) Again, in another place, he states that it "worketh wrath," (Rom. iv. 15;) as if by its arraignment it inflicted a deadly wound on the human race, and left them no hope of salvation. In this preparation, then, wherein God instructed the people to reverence and fear, a twofold object may be perceived; for, since men's minds are partly swollen with pride and haughtiness, and partly stupified by indifference, they must needs be either humbled or awakened, in order to their reception of divine teaching with the attention it deserves; nor can any be prepared to obey God, except he be bowed down and subdued by fear. Moreover, they then begin to be afraid when God's majesty is displayed to inspire them with terror. Thus, therefore, let the fact that the authority of the Law was ratified by many signs and wonders, teach us that this is the beginning of piety and faith in God's children. To this end also did God shake the earth, to arouse men's hearts from their slumber, or to correct them by taming their pride. This object is common to the Law, the Prophets, and the Gospel, and to the whole sum of divine teaching, to which due honour is never paid, unless God's majesty first shines forth, whereby He casts down all the haughtiness of the world. But we must not pass over what I lately asserted to be peculiar to the Law, viz., to fill men's minds with fear, and by setting forth its terrible curse, to cut off the hope of salvation; for, whilst it consists of three parts, each of them tends to the same end, that all should acknow-

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ledge themselves deserving of the judgment of eternal death, because in it God sustains no other character than that of a Judge, who, after having rigidly exacted what is due to Him, promises only a just reward, and threatens the transgressors with vengeance. But who will be found to be a perfect keeper of the Law? Nay, it is certain that all, from the least to the greatest, are guilty of transgression, wherefore God's wrath overhangs them all. This is what Paul means, when he writes that believers "have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but the spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, Abba, Father," (Rom. viii. 15;) shewing how much better is our condition than that of the old fathers, because the Law kept them enslaved in its bondage, whilst the Gospel delivers us from anxiety, and frees us from the stings of conscience; for all must necessarily tremble, and finally be overwhelmed by despair, who seek for salvation by works; but peace and rest only exist in the mercy of God. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews pursues this idea at greater length, where he says, "Ye are not come unto the mount that must be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words: which *voice* they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more, &c., (*whence* Moses said I exceedingly fear and quake:) but ye are come unto Mount Sion," &c. (Heb. xii. 18-22.) The *antithesis* here proves, that what was entrusted to Moses is separate and distinct from the Gospel; because God, who appeared in the Law as an avenger, now with fatherly kindness gently invites us unto salvation, and soothes our troubled minds by offering us the forgiveness of our sins. Now, Paul shews us that there is no contradiction in this diversity, because the people were taught by the Law not to seek for salvation anywhere but in the grace of Christ, and being convinced of the horrible condemnation under which they lay, were driven by fear to implore God's mercy; for, as men are apt to[1] allow themselves in sin, "sin (as Paul says, Rom. v. 13) is not imputed,

[1] Se pardonnent et dispensent aisement.—*Fr.*

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where there is no law;" but those, who delight themselves in darkness, are by the teaching of the Law brought before God's tribunal, that they may fully perceive their filthiness and be ashamed. Thus is Paul's saying fulfilled, that the life of the Law is man's death. (Rom. vii. 9.) Now, we understand why the promulgation of the Law was ratified by so many miracles; viz., because, in general, the authority of the divine teaching was to be established among the dull and careless, or the proud and rebellious; and, secondly, because the Law was propounded to men, who sought the means of flattering themselves, as the mirror of the curse, so that, in themselves lost, they might fly to the refuge of pardon. I have thought it advisable to say thus much by way of preface, for the purpose of directing my readers to the proper object of the history, which is here related. But Moses first recounts that the people came, at a single march, from Rephidim into the region of Sinai; for so I interpret it, that there was no intervening station; for their interpretation is forced and unnatural, who take "the same day" for the beginning of the month.

3. *And Moses went up.* It is probable that Moses sought, as he was wont, retirement, in order to take counsel of God; for he speaks not as of some new or unusual circumstance, but of a custom previously observed; because he dared not stop anywhere, nor make any further advances, except as far as was prescribed him by the mouth of God. His going up to God signifies no more than that he went out of the camp, that afar from the multitude, and from all distractions, he might in secrecy and quiet inquire of God, what was His pleasure; for he did not, like the superstitious, choose a lofty position, that he might be nearer to God; but he withdrew himself from every disturbance, that he might engage all his senses in the occupation of learning. Afterwards, however, he adds, that he had obtained more than he had hoped for, because God, beyond what was customary with Him, addressed him respecting the renewal of His covenant. And to this the opening words have reference—"Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel;" wherein the repetition and diversity of expression is empha-

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tic, as though He would speak of a very serious matter, and would thus awaken greater attention.

4. *Ye have seen.* With the view of gently inviting the people to obedience, He first recalls to their recollection the blessing of their deliverance, and then promises that the blessings of the future would be not inferior, if they on their part honoured their deliverer with the piety and gratitude which belong to Him. He recounts the two parts of His loving-kindness, first that He had exerted His tremendous power against the Egyptians, and secondly, that He had marvellously brought His redeemed people through the sea, and the mighty wilderness, as through the clouds and the air; for this was an instance of His inestimable grace, that He had made war against a most powerful king, had afflicted a most flourishing nation, and had devastated a land remarkable for its extreme fertility, in order to succour a body of despised slaves. For there was no dignity in them, who first of all were strangers, and moreover abject herdsmen, and devoted to base and shameful slavery, whereby God might be incited for their sakes to destroy the Egyptians, who were illustrious in glory, in wealth, in the richness of their land, and in the splendour of their empire. Wherefore it would have been detestable ingratitude not to acknowledge their great obligations to God. What He adds in the second place, that He bare them as eagles are wont to carry their young, has reference to the constant course of His paternal care. Moses will hereafter use the same comparison in his song, and it often occurs in the prophets. But He mentions the eagle rather than other birds, in my opinion, that He may magnify their difficulties, and thus commend His grace; for eagles lift up their young ones upon high places, and accustom them to look at the sun; thus the people, as if carried above the clouds on the wings of God, had surmounted every obstacle, however great. For the notion which some have, that eagles are mentioned instead of other birds, because they alone bear up their young ones on their wings, is a foolish and truly Rabbinical gloss.[1]

[1] This Rabbinical comment is thus briefly stated in *S. M.*,—I bare you as it were on my shoulders, as an eagle carries her young ones upon her

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5. *Now, therefore.* God declares that He will ever be the same, and will constantly persevere[1] (in blessing them), provided the Israelites do not degenerate, but remain devoted to their Deliverer; at the same time, He reminds them also, wherefore He has been so bountiful to them, viz., that they may continually aspire unto the end of their calling; for He had not willed to perform toward them a single act of liberality, but to purchase them as His peculiar people. This privilege he sets before them in the word סְגֻלָּה,[2] *segullah*, which means all things most precious, whatever, in fact, is deposited in a treasury; although the word "peculium," a peculiar possession, by which the old interpreter[3] has rendered it, is not unsuitable to the passage; because it is plain from the immediate context, that it denotes the separation of this people from all others; since these words directly follow: "for," or, *although* "all the earth is mine;" the particle כִּי, *ki*, being often taken *adversatively*, and there is no doubt but that God would more exalt His grace, by comparing this one nation with the whole world, as it is said in the song of Moses, "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel; for the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." (Deut. xxxii. 8.) The sum then is, that whilst the whole earth is in God's dominion, yet the race of Israel has been chosen by Him to excel all nations. Whence it is evident, that whereas the condition of all is alike, some are not distinguished from others by nature, but by gratuitous adoption; but, in order that they should abide in the possession of so great a blessing, fidelity towards God is required on their part. And,

wings, and not after the manner of other birds, who bear up their young ones with their feet wherever they wish to carry them.—*W.* See Illustrated Commentary on Deut. xxxii. 11.

[1] Added from *Fr.*

[2] סגלה. *S. M.* says this is equivalent to אוצר חביב, a beloved treasure. The root סגל does not occur in Hebrew, but in Arabic it signifies to mark with the owner's seal; so that the noun should mean, a possession on which the owner has stamped his mark. Comp. 2 Tim. ii. 19, and Ezek. ix. 4-6.—*W.*

[3] *i.e.*, The Vulgate. Our *A. V.* combines both ideas.

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first, they are commanded to listen to his voice, (since no sacrifice is more pleasing to him than obedience, 1 Sam. xv. 22 ;) and then a definition of obedience is added, viz., to keep His covenant.

6. *And ye shall be unto me.* He points out more clearly, and more at length, how the Israelites will be precious unto God ; viz., because they will be for "a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation." By these words, he implies that they will be endowed with sacerdotal as well as royal honours ; as much as to say, that they would not only be free, but also like kings, if they persevered in faith and obedience, since no kingdom is more desirable, or more happy, than to be the subjects of God. Moreover, he calls this "an holy kingdom," because all the kingdoms of the world were then in heathenism ; for the genitive, according to the usual idiom of the language, is put for an adjective, as if he had said, that they would enjoy not merely an earthly and transitory dominion, but also a sacred and heavenly one. Others understand it passively, that God would be their king ; whilst mortals, and for the most part cruel tyrants, would rule over other nations. Though I do not altogether reject this sense, yet I rather prefer the other, to which also St. Peter leads us: for when the Jews, who by their refusal of Christ had departed from the covenant, still improperly gloried in this title, he claims this honour for the members of Christ only, saying, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood," &c. (1 Pet. ii. 9.) But the passive sense would not accord with these words, viz., that believers are subject to the priesthood of God, for the Apostle gracefully applies the words to take away the unacceptableness of novelty ; as if he had said, God formerly promised to our fathers that they should be to Him for a royal priesthood. This privilege all, who separate themselves from Christ the Head, falsely lay claim to, since He alone makes us a royal priesthood. Meanwhile he teaches, by this apparent adaptation of the words, that what had been spoken by Moses is actually fulfilled. And, in fact, Christ appeared invested with the kingdom and the priesthood, that He might confer both of these privileges upon His members ; whence it follows, that whosoever divorce themselves from Him, are

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unworthy of either honour, and are justly deprived of them. The nation is here called holy, not with reference to their piety or personal holiness, but as set apart from others by God by special privilege. Yet on this kind of sanctification the other depends, viz., that they who are exalted by God's favour should cultivate holiness, and thus on their part sanctify God.

8. *And all the people answered.* We shall see in its proper place why God employed Moses as a messenger to carry backwards and forwards the commands and replies; now he merely relates what all the people answered, viz., that they would be obedient in all things. It was not a part, but the whole of the people who promised this, and the reply was unreserved, declaring that they would do whatsoever God required. Yet soon after they relapsed into their natural mind, and kept not their promise even in the smallest degree. Still we may believe that they spoke without dissembling; but that, although without any intention of deceiving God, they were carried away by a kind of headlong zeal, and deceived themselves. Nor was it the object of Moses to tell them in reproach that they had lied to God, or deceitfully boasted with their lips what they did not feel in their hearts; but, by stating how ready they were to obey, he deprives them hereafter of all pretence of ignorance. Nor is there any doubt that God inclined their minds to this docility, in order to establish the doctrine of His law. Meanwhile, let us learn from their example, that we must not merely obey God's word by some earnest impulse; and that a hasty feeling is of no use, unless it be followed by constant perseverance; and, therefore, let us learn to sift ourselves well, lest we rashly promise, without serious self-examination, more than we are able to perform. Yet we must not forget what I have already said, that they were all made willing by the secret inspiration of God, in order that they might be witnesses both to themselves and others of the many signs, by which the truth and faithfulness of the[1] heavenly doctrine was then confirmed.

9. And the Lord said unto Moses, 9. Tunc ait Jehova ad Mosen,

[1] La Loy.—*Fr.*

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Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever. And Moses told the words of the people unto the Lord.

10. And the Lord said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them to-day and to-morrow, and let them wash their clothes,

11. And be ready against the third day: for the third day the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai.

12. And thou shalt set bounds unto the people round about, saying, Take heed to yourselves, *that ye* go *not* up into the mount, or touch the border of it: whosoever toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death:

13. There shall not an hand touch it, but he shall surely be stoned, or shot through; whether *it be* beast or man, it shall not live: when the trumpet soundeth long, they shall come up to the mount.

14. And Moses went down from the mount unto the people, and sanctified the people; and they washed their clothes.

15. And he said unto the people, Be ready against the third day: come not at *your* wives.

Ecce, ego venio ad te in densa nube, ut audiat populus quum loquar tecum, atque etiam tibi credant in perpetuum. Indicaverat autem Moses Jehovæ verba populi.

10. Et dixit Jehova ad Mosen, Vade ad populum, et sanctifica eos hodie et cras, laventque vestimenta sua.

11. Et sint parati in diem tertium: quoniam die tertio descendet Jehova coram oculis totius populi super montem Sinai.

12. Et præscribet terminum populo per circuitum, dicendo, Cavete vobis ne ascendatis in montem, neque contingatis terminum ejus. Quicunque tetigerit montem, moriendo morietur.

13. Non tanget eum manus, sed lapidando lapidabitur, aut jaculis ferietur: sive jumentum fuerit, sive homo, non vivet, quum protraxerit buccina, ipsi ascendent in montem.

14. Descendit autem Moses e monte ad populum, et sanctificavit populum, et laverunt vestimenta sua.

15. Dixitque populo, Sitis parati in diem tertium, et ne accedatis ad uxores.

9. *And the Lord said unto Moses.* God here proclaims, that by a manifest symbol of His glory, He will make it evident that the Law proceeded not from Moses, but that he merely delivered faithfully what he received from heaven; for God was so covered with the cloud, as with a veil that He still upraised their minds as by a certain sign of His presence. On this was the authority of Moses founded, that the Israelites knew God to be the author of the doctrine, of which he was the minister. And this is especially worth remarking, because we gather from hence that there is no other mode of proving a doctrine, except by the assurance that it comes not from elsewhere, but from God alone; and thus is every mortal brought down to his level, lest any one, however excellent in wisdom, should dare to advance his own imaginations. For if the mightiest of prophets, Moses,

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obtained credit in the Church on no other grounds than because he bore the commands of God, and only taught what he had heard, how foolish and impudent will it be in teachers, who sink down far beneath him, to endeavour to attain a higher point! In fine, this passage shews that we must believe in God alone, but that at the same time we must listen to the prophets, who spake out of His mouth. Besides this, it appears that God did not wish to obtain credit for His servant Moses during a short period of time, but that posterity should pay him the same reverence even after his death. The call of some is temporary; and it may happen that God takes away the spirit of prophecy from those to whom He has given it; but so did He appear to Moses, as to ratify, and, as it were, consecrate the truth of his doctrine in all ages. Thence it follows, that the brightness of God's glory, which was shewn to his ancient people in the thick cloud, is not yet extinct, but that it ought to illuminate the minds of all the godly, reverently to submit themselves to Moses. What follows at the end of the verse is a repetition from the last; for there was no intervening reply of the people which Moses could report. The meaning is, that although the Israelites had voluntarily promised to abide in the path of duty, yet that this confirmation was added, like a spur to those who are running, that they may proceed more nimbly.

10. *And the Lord said unto Moses.* Before propounding His law, it is not unreasonable that God should command the people to be sanctified, lest He should cast pearls before swine, or give that which is holy unto dogs; for although by right of adoption they were holy, yet, as regarded themselves, the filthiness of their nature unfitted them for participating in so great a blessing. It was by no means right or just that the inestimable treasure should be polluted by foul and stinking vessels. Therefore, in the injunction that they should be sanctified, two things were pointed out,—that the sacred doctrine of God was not to be handled by unwashen hands, and that the whole human race is impure and polluted, and, consequently, that none can duly enter God's school save those who are cleansed from their filthiness. And, doubtless,

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it is the just reward of their unworthy profanation that so many readers or hearers profit not by heavenly doctrine, because they rush in without fear or reverence, as to some ridiculous stage play. This preparation, then, is seasonably commanded, to make ready God's scholars and render them fit to be taught. But while the inward purity of the heart is chiefly demanded, this ceremony was not without its use to accustom an ignorant people to meditate upon true holiness. That they should wash their clothes and abstain from the nuptial bed were things of nought in themselves; but when external rites are referred to their proper end, viz., to be exercises unto spiritual worship, they are useful aids to piety; and we know that God, in consideration of the times, before Christ's coming, employed such figures which now have no place under the brightness of the Gospel. But although the use of them be grown obsolete, yet the truth, which I spoke of, still remains, viz., that if we desire to be admitted to a participation in heavenly doctrine, we should "cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit." (2 Cor. vii. 1.) But here a question arises; for if, as Peter bears witness, faith purifies the heart, (Acts xv. 9,) and understanding of the doctrine goes before faith, since Paul declares that it "cometh by hearing," (Rom. x. 17,) the consequence is, that the order of things is inverted if the people are to be sanctified before they hear the Law, because in this way the means of sanctification is wanting. My reply is, that albeit faith, in so far as it embraces the offer of reconciliation and the Spirit of regeneration, can alone truly purify us; yet this by no means prevents the fear of God from going before to prepare a place for the word in our minds. And, properly speaking, a pious desire of learning, humility, and reverence should be accounted the commencement of faith, since it is from these elements that God begins to perfect faith in us by certain progressive steps. On this account James exhorts us to "receive with meekness the ingrafted word," because the door of the entrance is shut against it by pride, and obstinacy, and profane contempt. As to the meaning of the passage, to be "sanctified," and to "wash their clothes," are not spoken of as different things,

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but the second is added as the symbol[1] of the first; for under the Law the rite of ablution reminded the ancient people that no one can please God, except he both seek for expiation in the blood of Christ, and labour to purify himself from the pollutions of the flesh. Abstinence from cohabitation had the same object; for although there is nothing polluting or contaminating in the marriage bed, yet the Israelites were to be reminded that all earthly cares were, as much as possible, to be renounced, and all carnal affections to be put away, that they might give their entire attention to the hearing of the Law. The sanctity of marriage veils and covers whatever of sin there is in the cohabitation of man and wife; yet it is certain that it in some degree distracts them from having their whole minds occupied by spiritual affections. Therefore Paul makes this exception in the mutual obligation of the marriage bed, that couples may be separated for "fasting and prayer." (1 Cor. vii. 5.) Yet the moderation which God prescribed is to be observed; for God did not enjoin perpetual celibacy, but so arranged the time that the Israelites might be disengaged from all earthly preoccupations, and might more freely apply their whole minds to the reverent reception of the Law.

12. *And thou shalt set bounds.* By this symbol the Israelites were admonished to restrain their natural inquisitiveness, that they may be sober in their desires after knowledge, because God, by the teaching of His Law, only enlightens those who are as "little children." We know how great is men's natural curiosity, how frowardly they seek to penetrate the secrets of God, how daringly they indulge themselves, and how, by their irreverence, all religion and fear of God is extinguished in them; wherefore there was good cause why He should set these bounds, and restrain this perverse longing after unlawful knowledge. All would have wished to come, like Moses, to familiar converse with God; but they are commanded to stand within the boundaries, that they may obey God speaking to them by an interpreter. Thus are their modesty and docility proved, when they desire no more than is permitted them, and keep themselves within

[1] Comme marque visible.—*Fr.*

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the bounds of revelation. What was then enjoined upon His ancient people is extended also to us, that in reading and hearing we should not overpass the limits which God assigns us, but, content with the form of doctrine which He delivers to us, should let alone what He would have concealed from us; and, although He speaks to us from afar, should not be offended by the distance. Yet does He not prohibit the people from ascending, as though He grudged them a nearer prospect of His glory; but because it is expedient that the proud and improperly arrogant should be kept within His narrow limit, that they may be reminded of their weakness. To alarm them yet more, He commands that the men themselves,[1] and even beasts, though harmless, should be killed if they passed over the borders. We have just before explained what is meant by God's descending, viz., the manifestation of His power; since His essence which fills heaven and earth moves not from its place.

13. *There shall not a hand touch it.*[2] They ignorantly pervert the meaning who resolve the particle כִּי, *be*, into the adversative *else;* as if Moses forbade them to touch the mountain with the hand, under penalty of stoning.[3] Those also are far from the truth who think that what is ordained is, that one should not follow the other, or that none should stretch forth his hand to the transgressors for their help. Moses referred to something altogether different; for in order to render more detestable those who, by rash advances, should violate the limits placed by God, he commanded them to be killed afar off by stones or darts; as if

[1] "Or, pour plus estonner les hommes, il commande que les bestes memes," &c.; now, to alarm men more, He commands that even the beasts, &c.—*Fr.*

[2] There shall not a hand touch him, (eum.)—*Lat.*

Curiously enough, the French translation contradicts the Commentary, —"Nulle main ne la touchera (*i.e.*, la montagne) *autrement* il sera lapide, &c." Our translation, too, seems to carry this meaning. Dathe's Version is in accordance with Calvin's view,—"Nec tamen ejusmodi transgressorem manu esse tangendum (sc. ut vi adhibita ejiceretur e cancellis) sed lapidibus obruendum, &c." Hugo de S. Victor, in Willet, gives yet another conjecture,—"The hand of man shall not neede to be upon him; sed intelligitur lapidum ictibus in eum divinitus volitantibus necandus."

[3] Aben-Ezra sic exponit: Qui præscriptum terminum transierit in hunc nemo injiciat manus, nemo illum sequatur intra constitutos limites, sed projiciant ad eum lapides, aut feriant eum jaculis. *S. M.—W.*

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whosoever should touch them, even with a finger, would contract pollution. It is, then, as if he commanded them to be avoided as being accursed, lest they should infect others by their contagion. Therefore there is an *antithesis* between different kinds of death, viz., to smite with the sword or to shoot through with darts, and to strike with the hand. But lest the people should consider themselves rejected, and thus being offended by the ignominy of their repulse, should abandon their love and desire for the Law, He permits their ascent conditionally, viz., when the sound of the trumpet shall have been protracted for a long time, or it shall have done sounding. Thus there was no ground for complaining of the limitation which God had appointed for their safety.

16. And it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that *was* in the camp trembled.

17. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount.

18. And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire; and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.

19. And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice.

20. And the Lord came down upon mount Sinai, on the top of the mount: and the Lord called Moses *up* to the top of the mount; and Moses went up.

16. Et fuit die tertia, quum factum esset mane, facta sunt tonitrua, et fulgura, et nubes densissima super montem, et clangor tubæ intentissimus, expavitque universus populus qui erat in castris.

17. Et eduxit Moses populum in occursum Dei e castris: qui steterunt in inferiore parte montis.

18. Mons autem Sinai fumabat totus, eo quod descendisset super eum Jehova in igne: ascendebatque fumus ejus: sicut fumus fornacis, et commotus est universus mons vehementer.

19. Erat præterea clangor buccinæ procedens, et invalescebat valde: Moses loquebatur, et Deus respondebat ei in voce.

20. Descenderat autem Jehova supra montem Sinai, super verticem montis: et vocavit Jehova Mosen ad verticem montis, ascenditque Moses.

16. *And it came to pass on the third day.* We must bear in mind what I have already adverted to, that this terrible spectacle was partly to set the presence of God before their eyes, that His majesty might urge the beholders to obedience, and vindicate His doctrine from contempt, and partly to express the nature of the Law, which in itself produces

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nothing but mere terror. The air was disturbed by thunder and lightnings, and the sound of the trumpet; the mountain was wrapped in smoke and darkness, that the people might humbly prostrate themselves before God, and solemnly embrace the covenant proposed to them; since religion never penetrates the mind so that it seriously receives God's word until its vices are cleansed and corrected, and it is really subdued. And this fear is common also to the Gospel; for as in the promulgation of the Law God shook the earth, so when He speaks by the Prophet of the coming of Christ, and the restoration of His Church, He says, "Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens and the earth," &c. (Hag. ii. 6.) Thus, too, David, when he would point to God as the avenger of His Church, describes Him under this image; for no doubt when, in Psalm xviii. 7-9, he says, "Then the earth shook and trembled, the foundations also of the hills moved and were shaken,—there went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured; he bowed the heavens also, and came down; and darkness was under his feet," he alludes to the history which Moses here relates. Habakkuk (iii. 3) yet more plainly does so,—"God came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran." Meanwhile the other point remains, that the awful prodigies, at which the people needs must tremble, were added as seals to the promulgation of the Law, because the Law was given to cite slumbering consciences to the judgment-seat, that, through fear of eternal death, they might flee for refuge to God's mercy.

17. *And Moses brought forth the people.* We learn from these words that the prodigies were not intended to drive the people from God's sight, and that they were not smitten with fear to exasperate and disgust them with the doctrine, but that God's covenant was no less lovely than alarming; for they are commanded to go and "meet God," presenting themselves with minds ready unto obedience. But this could not be unless they heard in the Law something besides precepts and threatenings. Yet in the smoke and fire, and other signs, some fear was added, in accordance with the office of the Law, because the sinner will never be capable

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of pardon until he learns to tremble from consciousness of his guilt, nay, until confounded with dread he lies like one dead before the tribunal of God. In the two following verses, Moses explains what he had briefly touched upon respecting the meeting with God; for he shews that God was near, since His majesty appeared upon the top of Sinai. He adds that he stood within the bounds, because he went up by himself alone, and that by invitation; for he clears himself from the accusation of temerity, by expressly stating that he passed over the limits assigned to the people, not voluntarily, but at the command and call of God. [1]It appears from the context itself that the order of the narration is inverted, which the old translator does not perceive, and perverts the sense. God's answering him "by a voice," means that He spoke aloud and clearly, viz., so that the people might hear, as we shall see hereafter in Deut. iv.

21. And the Lord said unto Moses, Go down, charge the people, lest they break through unto the Lord to gaze, and many of them perish.

21. Dixitque Jehova ad Mosen, Descende: contestare populum ne perrumpat ad Jehovam videndi causa, et cadat ex eis multitudo.

22. And let the priests also, which come near to the Lord, sanctify themselves, lest the Lord break forth upon them.

22. Quinetiam sacerdotes qui appropinquant ad Jehovam sanctificent se, ne forte rupturam illis faciat Jehova.

23. And Moses said unto the Lord, The people cannot come up to mount Sinai: for thou chargedst us, saying, Set bounds about the mount, and sanctify it.

23. Et ait Moses ad Jehovam, Non poterit populus ascendere in montem Sinai: quia tu nos contestatus es, dicendo, Distermina montem, et sanctifica illum.

24. And the Lord said unto him, Away, get thee down, and thou shalt come up, thou, and Aaron with thee: but let not the priests and the people break through to come up unto the Lord, lest he break forth upon them.

24. Et dixit ei Jehova, Vade, descende, et ascendes tu et Aaron tecum, sacerdotes autem et populus non perrumpant ut ascendant ad Jehovam, ne forte rupturam in illis faciat.

25. So Moses went down unto the people, and spake unto them.

25. Descendit itaque Moses ad populum, et loquutus est apud eos.

21. *And the Lord said unto Moses.* By God's command

[1] This sentence is omitted in the *Fr.* I presume the allusion here is to verse 20, which the *V.* translates "descendit, and not as *C.*, "descenderat." *Corn. a Lapide* defends the *V.*, with which our *A. V.* agrees, conceiving that a still closer descent "in a thicker cloud, and with greater glory," upon the very top of the mountain, over which the fire had only hovered before, is here described. It may be so; but his reasoning, founded on the word "super," which is used in both cases, does not prove it.

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the same prohibition is repeated, that the people should not pass over the bounds, because, without doubt, it was not enough to have forbidden them once, as we may gather from the reply of Moses; for he thought that since they were all admonished, there was no necessity for a new prohibition. But God insists with greater vehemence, and again with threatenings, orders them to be charged that they take diligent heed to themselves. He knew, forsooth, that He had to do with the rebellious, for whose subjugation a sorer dread of punishment would be necessary. Now, since we are no better than they, let us not be surprised if God often spurs us on by the application of many exhortations, and redoubles His threats, for else forgetfulness of all which He has once enjoined would creep over us. This passage also confirms the fact, that the curiosity which influences men's minds is greatly displeasing to God; for He expressly commands that they should not break through to gaze,—not because He would have anything concealed or hidden which it was profitable for them to know, but because their inquiries ought to be sober; and this is the legitimate limit of knowledge, humbly to learn at God's mouth what He voluntarily teaches,—not to advance with too anxious longings, but to follow Him as He leads us.

23. *And Moses said unto the Lord.* Because Moses was persuaded that the people would be obedient, he rejoins that the decree which had already been pronounced would be sufficient, and that the repetition of it would be in some degree supererogatory; for when he says that "the people cannot come up," he replies that he puts himself forward in the name of all as their surety. And this he does honestly, and in accordance with the rule of charity; yet it appears from God's reply that he was deceived, whilst judging of others by his own feelings. Whilst, however, he unhesitatingly executes the task allotted to him, it is plain that he preferred the command of God to his own preconceived opinion; and thus taught us by his example, that whatever may be the imaginations which come into our minds, they must still be submitted to this yoke, that God's authority alone may have the pre-eminence. A doubt may arise

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because He names "the priests;" since the priestly office was not yet committed to the Levites. Some, therefore, understand it to mean all the first-born, because, by ancient and common consent, it is allowed that they were always invested with the honour of the priesthood. But although I readily admit that they were chosen from the first-born, yet I do not think it probable that out of that immense multitude there were special priests for every house. In the meantime we may conjecture that since no heathen nations were then without priests, there was no less method amongst the chosen people; for what common sense dictated to the blind, assuredly a purer religion more clearly shewed, viz., that God's worship should not be separated from the priesthood.

FROM EXODUS, CHAPTER TWENTY.

18. And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and, when the people saw *it*, they removed, and stood afar off.

18. Omnis populus videbant tonitrua et lampades, et clamorem buccinæ, et montem fumantem, vidit *inquam* populus, et commoti sunt, steteruntque procul.

19. And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die.

19. Atque dixerunt Mosi, Loquere tu nobiscum, et obsequemur: et ne loquatur nobiscum Deus, ne forte moriamur.

20. And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not.

20. Respondit autem Moses populo, Ne timeatis: quia ut tentaret vos venit Deus, et ut sit timor ejus ante conspectum vestrum, ut non peccetis.

21. And the people stood afar off: and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God *was*.

21. Stetit igitur populus procul, Moses autem appropinquavit ad caliginem, in qua erat Deus.

18. *And all the people saw the thunderings.* Because in the parallel passage[1] Moses more largely pursues what he here only touches upon briefly, I shall also defer my full exposition of it. If he had been the only spectator of God's glory, the credit of his testimony would be lighter; after having, then, reported the ten commandments, which God Himself spake with His own sacred lips in the hearing of the people, he adds, at the same time, that the lightnings shone openly,

[1] Au passage de Deuteronome, que nous verrons tautost.—*Fr.*

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the mountain smoked, the trumpets sounded, and the thunder rolled. It follows, therefore, that by these conspicuous and illustrious signs, the law was ratified before all the people, from the greatest even to the least. The confession of the whole people is added; when, overwhelmed with alarm, they supplicate God to go on speaking no more. For no longer could they now despise the voice of the man, whom they had of their own accord desired to be given them as their mediator, lest they should be consumed by the awful voice of God. He lays before them the object, for which those signs had appeared to terrify them, viz., that God might subdue them to obedience. They were terrified, then, not that they might be stupified with astonishment, but only that they might be humbled and submit themselves to God. And this is a peculiar privilege, that the majesty of God, before whom heaven and earth tremble, does not[1] destroy but only proves and searches His children.

FROM DEUTERONOMY, CHAPTER FIVE.

THE REPETITION OF THE SAME HISTORY.

22. These words the Lord spake unto all your assembly in the mount, out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice; and he added no more: and he wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me.

22. Verba hæc loquutus est Jehova ad cunctam congregationem vestram in monte e medio ignis nubis et caliginis, voce magna, et non addidit: scripsitque illa in duabus tabulis lapideis, et dedit illa mihi.

23. And it came to pass, when ye heard the voice out of the midst of the darkness, (for the mountain did burn with fire,) that ye came near unto me, *even* all the heads of your tribes, and your elders;

23. Fuit autem quum audivissetis vocem e medio tenebrarum, (mons enim ardebat igne,) accessistis ad me omnes duces tribuum vestrarum, et seniores vestri.

24. And ye said, Behold, the Lord our God hath shewed us his glory, and his greatness, and we have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire: we have seen this day that God doth talk with man, and he liveth.

24. Et dixistis, En ostendit nobis Jehova Deus noster gloriam suam, et magnitudinem suam, et vocem ejus audivimus e medio ignis: hodie vidimus quod loquutus est Deus cum homine, et vixit.

[1] There is a play on the words in the Latin here: "Non exanimet, sed tantum examinet."

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25. Now therefore why should we die? for this great fire will consume us. If we hear the voice of the Lord our God any more, then we shall die.

26. For who *is there of* all flesh, that hath heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we *have*, and lived?

27. Go thou near, and hear all that the Lord our God shall say; and speak thou unto us all that the Lord our God shall speak unto thee, and we will hear *it*, and do *it*.

28. And the Lord heard the voice of your words, when ye spake unto me; and the Lord said unto me, I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken unto thee: they have well said all that they have spoken.

29. Oh that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!

30. Go say to them, Get you into your tents again.

31. But as for thee, stand thou here by me, and I will speak unto thee all the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments, which thou shalt teach them, that they may do *them* in the land which I give them to possess it.

25. Nunc igitur quare moriemur? consumet enim nos ignis magnus iste: si iterum audierimus vocem Dei nostri, moriemur.

26. Nam quæ ulla fuit caro, ut audiat vocem Dei viventis, loquentis e medio ignis, sicut nos, et vivat?

27. Accede tu, et audi omnia quæ dixerit Jehova Deus noster: tu autem loqueris ad nos quæcunque dixerit Jehova Deus noster tibi, et audiemus atque faciemus.

28. Audivitque Jehova vocem verborum vestrorum quum loquemini ad me. Et dixit Jehova mihi, Audivi vocem verborum populi hujus quæ dixerunt tibi: bene dixerunt quæcunque loquuti sunt.

29. Quis det ut sit cor eorum istud illis, ut timeant me, et custodiant omnia præcepta mea omnibus diebus, ut bene sit illis et filiis eorum in sæculum?

30. Vade, dic eis, Revertimini in tabernacula vestra.

31. Tu vero hic sta apud me, et proferam tibi omnia præcepta et statuta et judicia quæ illos docebis, ut faciant in terra quam ego do illis possidendam.

22. *These words the Lord spake.* That there may be no doubt about the authority of the law, and that it may not be depreciated by the people, Moses recalls to their memory that the presence of God, as He spake it, was manifested by sure tokens; for this was the object of the fire, the clouds, and the darkness, whereby God's voice was signalized, lest its source might be obscure. He adds, that it was "a great voice," *i.e.*, a voice which had, in an unwonted manner, penetrated far and wide. Nor are the witnesses few, whom he cites, but all that vast multitude, which for the most part would have been more disposed to extinguish the glory of God, unless it had been there made known by manifest proofs. The sum is, that there is no question as to who was

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the Lawgiver, whose majesty was then proclaimed by tremendous prodigies, and presented before the eyes of an immense multitude. It will be more convenient to speak elsewhere of the two tables. When Moses states that God "added no more," he signifies that a perfect rule of life is contained in the ten commandments, and that, when their instruction is fully received, the whole body of wisdom is attained to, so that the people need seek to know no more; when God, then, made an end of speaking, He Himself laid down the bounds of legitimate inquiry.

23. *And it came to pass, when ye heard.* Lest the Israelites should undervalue his teaching, because he had been put between them by God as their minister, Moses meets the objection, (by reminding them) that it was done at their petition and request. We know how proudly they were wont to reject him; as if they saw in him nothing but what was earthly and human; it was needful, then, that God Himself should speak to rescue His servant from the contempt of posterity. For the people themselves, being convicted of their foolish and preposterous request, could never afterwards have any pretext for rejecting Moses, as if he had not evidenced the truth of his calling. And here their astonishing perverseness betrayed itself, in not being ashamed to refuse credit to the holy Prophet, after he had been approved by so many miracles. Assuredly, if they had been just and honest judges, it would have been sufficiently notorious, and certain to them, that Moses did not speak of himself, or of his own impulse, but that he was the organ of the Spirit; yet the doctrine of God was scorned by these proud, and perverse, and fretful beings, because it was brought to them by the hands of a mortal man. They, therefore, by their importunate desires, draw down God from heaven, to speak Himself; but immediately terror seizes on their minds, so that they flee from His voice. Thus experience taught them that there was nothing better for them than to hear God speaking to them by the mouth of Moses; and they were instructed by the just reward of their temerity to choose and prefer that mode of teaching which they had spurned; for, if in future they refused to give credit to Moses, whom

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they had themselves chosen as their mediator with God, they brought themselves in guilty of gross and wicked contumacy; and this is what he now reproaches them with. It would have been worse than unseemly in them, when God had yielded to their prayers, to reject that blessing which they had besought of Him. On this account he reminds them, that, after they had been eye-witnesses of God's fearful power, they had voluntarily asked that He should not speak to them any more; and, lest they should object that this was done only by a few, or inconsiderately, or in tumult, he expressly testifies that these requests were presented by the heads of their tribes, and their elders.

24. *Behold, the Lord our God hath shewed us.* They are urged by their own confession no more to dare oppose themselves to the ministry of Moses. For, when they confess that they saw the glory and the greatness of God, they oblige themselves to the necessity of obedience, unless they choose avowedly to make war against God. At the end of the verse, where they say that "God doth talk with man," &c., not only do they mean that there are men surviving on earth who have heard with their ears the voice of God come down from heaven, but they express their astonishment at what was scarcely to be believed. For, although it was sufficiently notorious to them that God had formerly spoken with their fathers; yet, because a long period had elapsed since these revelations had ceased, they are amazed as at a new thing. We see, too, a long time afterwards, that as often as God appeared to His servants, they were overwhelmed with the fear of death, and it was like a proverb with them, "We shall die, because we have seen God." (Judges xiii. 22.) Good reason, then, is there why they should celebrate this extraordinary privilege, that they had not been swallowed up by the glory of God; for, if at the sight of Him the mountains melt, and all that is most durable is annihilated, and all that is strongest is broken to pieces, how should man stand than whom nothing is more frail or perishable? If by His secret will the troubled air causes not only animals but trees and rocks to tremble; how shall it be when God displays His might not in the elements alone, but when de-

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scending from heaven He speaks by the voice of His mouth? It is not unreasonable, then, that the Israelites should account it miraculous that they had heard God's voice, and were not brought to annihilation. Herein they indirectly rebuke their own folly, because, by their inconsiderate desire, they would have drawn destruction upon themselves, if they had not been aided by God's mercy. The two following verses appear to contradict each other; for, when they had experienced that those to whom God manifests Himself, are not always destroyed and perish, why do they say that they shall die if He continues to speak to them? They seem, indeed, in so saying to shew some inconsistency; yet is there cause for them to fear for the future that danger from which they had escaped by the marvellous indulgence of God. It is, then, as if they had said, It is more than enough for us once to have provoked God against us; it is of His inestimable loving-kindness that He has thus far pardoned us; meanwhile, we must beware lest our perversity bring upon us heavier punishment, unless we speedily correct our folly. Hence may a useful admonition be drawn; for, although the voice of God has not sounded in our ears, yet the experience of His ancient people ought to be sufficient to persuade us assuredly that, when God sets teachers over us, He makes the best provision for our salvation; because, if He Himself should thunder from heaven, His majesty would be intolerable to us. And this should avail to repress their destructive itching, who desire God daily to descend from heaven, or at least to send His revelations by angels; and who thus despise the ministers of mortal race whom He employs. In a word, this history is an illustrious proof that God governs His Church by the external preaching of the word, because this is most expedient for us.

26. *For who is there of all flesh?* The word "flesh" is used in contempt, as often elsewhere, for the human race; for, although we consist of body and soul, yet when the frailty of men, and their perishing and transitory condition is referred to, Scripture calls them "flesh." In this sense Zechariah calls upon "all flesh *to be* silent before the Lord," (ii. 13,) and Isaiah says that "all flesh is grass," (xl. 6,) and

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elsewhere, that "the horses of the Egyptians are flesh, and not spirit," (xxxi. 3.) In these words, then, the reason is given why the Israelites should wonder that they were not killed and consumed after hearing God's voice. Still they were not ignorant that God had formerly spoken in the burning bush; but in their agony of fear they do not reflect on what had previously happened, but only express their own feeling that God's voice is deadly to the flesh, unless it is softened by some interposing remedy. For the notion of the Rabbins, that the Prophets are not to be counted amongst men, is a foolish fancy, except in so far as God supports and strengthens them by His Spirit, that they may be equal to the reception of visions. The Israelites were fully aware that Moses also was himself a mere mortal; yet, because they knew that he was God's chosen interpreter, they do not doubt but that he will be inspired with power from heaven, to endure the speaking of God. Nor is there any question that this confession was forced from them, that they may at length learn to fall back to their proper place, and to submit themselves to Moses, against whom they had been so often rebellious. Now, therefore, they willingly subscribe to that distinction, which before they would not bear. Their promise, that they would do all things which God should command, undoubtedly proceeded from the fervour of their zeal; and therefore, God soon afterwards praises their answer. Their words were to the same effect, as if they had said that they would value whatever Moses might set before them, as if God Himself should thunder from heaven. Meanwhile, as to themselves, their levity and inconsistency was soon discovered. Thus do men often hastily and rashly consent to promise what they are not able to perform, although they do not intentionally desire to deceive, from neglecting to examine their own powers. God, therefore, pronounces what they said to be right, viz., that they would be obedient to Moses, and content with his teaching. And this sentiment has reference to us also, who are commanded to hear Moses and the Prophets, but especially God's only Son; lest our vague speculations should hurry us away further than becomes us.

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29. *O that there were such an heart in them.* God signifies that they would not be so firm and faithful in keeping their promises, as they were ready and willing to make them; and thus that hypocrisy was not altogether banished, or purged from their minds. Moreover, He figuratively (*improprie*) assumes a human feeling, because it would be vain and absurd for Him to desire what it was in His power to confer. Certainly He has the power of bending and directing men's hearts whithersoever He pleases. Why, then, does He wish that it were given to the people from some other quarter, that they should be always kept in the path of duty, except that, speaking in the character of a man, He shews that it was rather to be wished than hoped that the people would constantly persevere in their fidelity? Wherefore this and similar passages have been ignorantly abused by some, to establish man's free will. [1]They understand this passage, as if man's will were capable of bending either way, and that he possessed the power of doing right, whilst God without interfering looked on at the event; as if God's secret counsel, and not rather the end and use of external teaching, were referred to here. But we, taught by innumerable testimonies of Scripture, maintain, that it is the attribute of God alone to give what He here requires. So also immediately afterwards He says, that He wishes it may be well with the Israelites and their children, viz., because it is certain that it depends on men whether they are happy or not, as often as God invites them, when they refuse the grace offered to them; yet does it not therefore follow, that it depends on every man's free will to attain happiness for himself. But here we must consider God's will as it is set before us in His word, not as it is hidden in Himself; for, while by His word He invites all promiscuously to (eternal[2]) life, He only quickens by His secret inspiration those whom He has elected. In sum, although God approves of the people's answer, He says that there will be too much difficulty in the performance of it, for the event to accord with it.

30. *Go say to them.* He more plainly subjoins God's consent to the people's prayer; as much as to say, that what

[1] Tels docteurs cornus.—*Fr.*

[2] Added from the French.

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they had asked was ratified by God's decree; whence it follows that, if they refuse to obey Moses, they will not be only guilty of perverseness and levity, but will violate a divine decree. I have before shewn why God honours the doctrines of the law by various titles, viz., that the Israelites may more willingly acquiesce in them. But, lest they should think that what was enjoined them was only to remain in force, and to be observed for a short time, He expressly refers to the perpetuity of the Law; for this is the import of the words, in which He declares Himself to teach them what they were to do in the land which He should give them.

The Preface to the Law.

EXODUS, CHAPTER XX.

1. And God spake all these words, saying,
2. I *am* the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

1. Et loquutus est Deus omnia verba hæc: dicendo,
2. Ego Jehova Deus tuus, qui eduxi te e terra Ægypti, e domo servorum.

THE REPETITION.

DEUT. V. 1. And Moses called all Israel, and said unto them, Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your ears this day, that ye may learn them, and keep and do them.
2. The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb.
3. The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, *even* us, who *are* all of us here alive this day.
4. The Lord talked with you face to face in the mount, out of the midst of the fire,
5. (I stood between the Lord and you at that time, to shew you the word of the Lord; for ye were afraid by reason of the fire, and went not up into the mount,) saying,
6. I *am* the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.

1. Vocavitque Moses universum Israelem, et dixit eis, Audi Israel statuta et judicia, quæ ego hodie loquor in auribus vestris, ut discatis ea et custodiatis ad præstandum.
2. Jehova Deus noster percussit nobiscum fœdus in Horeb.
3. Non cum patribus nostris percussit Deus fœdus hoc, sed nobiscum, qui ipsi hodie omnes vivimus.
4. Facie ad faciem loquutus est Jehova nobiscum in monte:
5. (Ego stabam inter Jehovam et inter vos tempore illo ad annuntiandum vobis sermonem Jehovæ: quia timuistis a facie ignis, et non ascendistis in montem:) dicendo,
6. Ego Jehova Deus tuus qui eduxi te e terra Ægypti, e domo servorum.

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DEUT. iv. 20. But the Lord hath taken you, and brought you forth out of the iron furnace, *even* out of Egypt, to be unto him a people of inheritance, as *ye are* this day.

20. Vos autem tulit Jehova, et eduxit vos e fornace ferrea ex Ægypto, ut sitis ei in populum hæreditatis, sicut die hac.

EXOD. XX. 1. *And God spake.* I am aware that many agree in reading this verse and the next in connection with each other, and thus making them together the first of the ten commandments. Others taking them separately, consider the affirmation to stand in the place of one entire commandment; but since God neither forbids nor commands anything here, but only comes forth before them in His dignity, to devote the people to Himself, and to claim the authority He deserves, which also He would have extended to the whole Law, I make no doubt but that it is a general preface, whereby He prepares their minds for obedience. And surely it was necessary that, first of all, the right of the legislator should be established, lest what He chose to command should be despised, or contemptuously received. In these words, then, God seeks to procure reverence to Himself, before He prescribes the rule of a holy and righteous life. Moreover, He not merely declares Himself to be Jehovah, the only God to whom men are bound by the right of creation, who has given them their existence, and who preserves their life, nay, who is Himself the life of all; but He adds, that He is the peculiar God of the Israelites; for it was expedient, not only that the people should be alarmed by the majesty of God, but also that they should be gently attracted, so that the law might be more precious than gold and silver, and at the same time "sweeter than honey," (Ps. cxix. 72, 103;) for it would not be enough for men to be compelled by servile fear to bear its yoke, unless they were also attracted by its sweetness, and willingly endured it. He afterwards recounts that special blessing, wherewith He had honoured the people, and by which He had testified that they were not elected by Him in vain; for their redemption was the sure pledge of their adoption. But, in order to bind them the better to Himself, He reminds them also of their former condition; for Egypt was like a house of bondage, from whence the Israelites were delivered. Wherefore, they were no more their

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own masters, since God had purchased them unto Himself. This does not indeed literally apply to us; but He has bound us to Himself with a holier tie, by the hand of His only-begotten Son; whom Paul teaches to have died, and risen again, "that He might be Lord both of the dead and the living." (Rom. xiv. 9.) So that He is not now the God of one people only, but of all nations, whom He has called into His Church by general adoption.

DEUT. V. 1. *And Moses called all Israel.* Since the plan and order of exposition which I have adopted required that this same preface, as it is repeated word for word in Deuteronomy, should here also be read together, I have thought fit also to insert the five verses, which in this place precede it. In the first verse, Moses exhorts the people to hear the judgments and statutes of God, which he sets before them. He likewise states the object of this, that they should keep[1] to do them; as much as to say, that he was not offering them mere empty speculations, which it was enough to understand with the mind, and to talk about, but that the rule for the ordering of their lives was also contained in his teaching; and, therefore, that it demands imperatively their serious meditation.

2. *The Lord our God.* In these words he commends the Law; because it must be accounted a peculiar blessing, and a very high honour to be taken into covenant by God. Wherefore, that they may anxiously prepare themselves to embrace the Law, he says that what was above all things to be desired had been freely offered to them, viz., that they should be united in covenant with God. In the next verse he still further magnifies this advantage by comparison; because God had given more to them than to their fathers. Thence is all excuse taken from them, unless, for the sake of manifesting their gratitude, they give themselves up entirely to God, and in return worship with sincere affection Him whom they have experienced to be so bountiful a Father. Those who would paraphrase this sentence, "Not *only* with our fathers, but *also* with us," pervert its proper meaning; the grounds of their mistake being, that God had

[1] So in margin *A. V.*

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formerly made a covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But this may be easily refuted; because the name of "fathers" does not refer to these, but he means by it such as had died in Egypt during the last 200 years; to whose case he justly prefers that of the surviving people, with whom the ancient covenant had been renewed. Now, this reference to time was in no slight degree calculated to stimulate and arouse them to obedience; for it would have been disgraceful in them not to acknowledge that they were honoured more than their fathers by this especial privilege, in order that they should excel them in their earnest zeal for God's service. Christ uses the same argument with His disciples, Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see: and the ears which hear the things that ye hear, &c.,[1] (Matt. xiii. 16, and Luke x. 23,) "many Prophets and kings have desired," &c. The sum is, that the more bountifully God deals with us, the more heinous and intolerable is the crime of ingratitude, unless we willingly come to Him when He calls us, and submit ourselves to His instruction.

4. *Face to face.* Again he commends the Law by mentioning their certainty about it; for, when God openly manifested Himself, there could be no doubt of the author from whom it proceeded. To speak "face to face," is equivalent to discoursing openly and familiarly; and in point of fact God had spoken with them, as mortals and friends communicate with each other in their mutual dealings. Moreover, lest any doubt should still remain, God set before their eyes a visible manifestation of His glory, by appearing in the fire; for no other voice but that of God Himself could proceed out of fire. In the next verse a kind of explanation is added, when he says that he was the interpreter, who laid before them the commands he received from God. And thus he reconciles two things which seem at first sight to be contradictory, viz., that God spoke in person, and yet by a mediator; since they themselves having heard God's voice petitioned in their fear that He should not continue to speak in the same way. Hence it follows that they were convinced, by a sense of the divine glory and majesty, that it was not

[1] The quotation here appears to have been made from memory.

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allowable for them to doubt the authority of the law. But I only slightly glance at this, because it has been more fully treated of before.

DEUT. IV. 20. *But the Lord hath taken you.* He argues that, from the period of their deliverance, they have been wholly devoted to God, since He has purchased them for His own peculiar possession. Hence it follows that they are under His jurisdiction and dominion; because it would be foul and wicked ingratitude in them to shake off the yoke of their redeemer. And, in order to strengthen the obligation, he extols the greatness of the favour, because nothing could be more wretched than they were, when God stretched forth His hand to deliver them. Their bondage is therefore called metaphorically, a "furnace," nay, an "iron" one; and, then, their present far different condition is compared with it; for this was solid and most desirable happiness, that they should be translated into God's peculiar inheritance.

LEVITICUS, CHAPTER XIX.

36. I *am* the Lord your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt.

37. Therefore shall ye observe all my statutes, and all my judgments, and do them: I *am* the Lord.

LEVIT. XX. 8. And ye shall keep my statutes, and do them: I *am* the Lord which sanctify you.

LEVIT. xxii. 31. Therefore shall ye keep my commandments, and do them: I *am* the Lord.

32. Neither shall ye profane my holy name; but I will be hallowed among the children of Israel: I *am* the Lord which hallow you,

33. That brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I *am* the Lord.

DEUT. iv. 1. Now therefore hearken, O Israel, unto the statutes, and unto the judgments, which I teach you, for to do *them*, that ye may live, and go in and possess the land which the Lord God of your fathers giveth you.

36. Ego Jehova Deus vester, qui eduxi vos e terra Ægypti.

37. Custodite igitur omnia statuta mea, et omnia judicia mea, et facite illa: ego Jehova.

8. Custodite statuta mea, et facite ea, Ego Jehova sanctificans vos.

31. Observate præcepta mea, et facite ea: ego Jehova.

32. Et ne polluatis nomen sanctum meum, sed sanctificer in medio Israel. Ego Jehova sanctificans vos.

33. Qui eduxi vos e terra Ægypti, ut essem vobis in Deum: ego Jehova.

1. Et nunc Israel audi statuta et judicia, quæ ego doceo vos, ut faciatis: ut vivatis, atque ingrediamini, et possideatis terram quam Jehova Deus patrum vestrorum dat vobis.

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2. Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish *ought* from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you.

2. Non addetis ad verbum quod ego præcipio vobis, neque minuetis ex eo, ut custodiatis præcepta Jehovæ Dei vestri, quæ ego præcipio vobis.

DEUT. v. 32. Ye shall observe to do therefore as the Lord your God hath commanded you: ye shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left.

32. Custodite ergo ut faciatis quemadmodum præcepit Jehova Deus vester vobis: ne declinetis ad dextram, aut ad sinistram.

33. Ye shall walk in all the ways which the Lord your God hath commanded you, that ye may live, and *that it may be* well with you, and *that* ye may prolong *your* days in the land which ye shall possess.

33. Per omnem viam quam præcepit Jehova Deus vester vobis, ambulabitis, ut vivatis, et bene sit vobis, et prorogetis dies in terra quam possidebitis.

DEUT. xiii. 18. When thou shalt hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, to keep all his commandments which I command thee this day, to do *that which is* right in the eyes of the Lord thy God.

18. Quia audies vocem Jehovæ Dei tui, ut custodias omnia præcepta ejus, quæ ego præcipio tibi hodie, ut facias quod rectum est in oculis Jehovæ Dei tui.

LEVIT. XIX. 36. *I am the Lord your God.* In these first four passages he treats of the same points which we have observed in the preface to the Law; for he reasons partly from God's authority, that the law should be reverently obeyed, because the Creator of heaven and earth justly claims supreme dominion; and, partly, he sets before them the blessing of redemption, that they may willingly submit themselves to His law, from whom they have obtained their safety. For, whenever God calls Himself Jehovah, it should suggest His majesty, before which all ought to be humbled; whilst redemption should of itself produce voluntary submission. At the beginning he repeats the same words which he had lately used; and thence exhorts them to observe His statutes and judgments, *i.e.*, treasure them diligently in their minds. Afterwards he reminds them wherefore they ought attentively to observe the Law, viz., that they may perform the works which God therein requires. Nor is it without a reason that at the end of the second verse He declares Himself to be Jehovah, because it is not easy either to subdue rebellious minds or to retain fickle ones in the fear of God. In the next verse, the qualification "which sanctify you" is added, to arouse them earnestly to prove their gratitude to

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God, who has by peculiar privilege separated them from the rest of mankind.

LEVIT. XXII. 32. *Neither shall ye profane.* In forbidding the profanation of His name, He confirms in other words the foregoing sentiment; guarding by them His worship from all corruptions, that it may be maintained in purity and integrity. The same, too, is the object of the clause in apposition, which immediately follows; for they hallow God's name who turn not away from its rightful and sincere worship. Let this be carefully observed, that whatever fancies men devise, are so many profanations of God's name; for although the superstitious may please themselves by their imaginations, yet is all their religion full of sacrilege, whereby God complains that His holiness is profaned. Mark, also, the mutual relation, when God requires Himself to be hallowed, even as he hallows the people; for nothing can be more unseemly than for the Israelites to mix up with idols Him by whose blessing they excel all other nations. It is as though He commanded them to reflect from whence their superiority proceeded, that they may pay their debt of gratitude to Him who is its author. In sum, forasmuch as He had separated them from heathen nations, He condemns all wicked blending with them, whereby the integrity of religion is corrupted, so that He may alone have the pre-eminence, and all idols may be repudiated.[1]

DEUT. IV. 1. *Now, therefore, hearken, O Israel.* He requires the people to be teachable, in order that they may learn to serve God; for the beginning of a good and upright life is to know what is pleasing to God. From hence, then, does Moses commence commanding them to be attentive in seeking direction from the Law; and then admonishing them to prove by their whole life that they have duly profited in the Law. The promise which is here inserted, only invites them to unreserved obedience through hope of the inheritance. The main point is, that they should neither add to nor diminish from the pure doctrine of the Law; and this cannot be the case, unless men first renounce their own private feelings, and then shut their ears against all

[1] Addition in French, "Et reboutées bien loin."

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the imaginations of others. For none are to be accounted (true) disciples of the Law, but those who obtain their wisdom from it alone. It is, then, as if God commanded them to be content with His precepts; because in no other way would they keep His law, except by giving themselves wholly to its teaching. Hence it follows, that they only obey God who depend on His authority alone; and that they only pay the Law its rightful honour, who receive nothing which is opposed to its natural meaning. The passage is a remarkable one, openly condemning whatsoever man's ingenuity may invent for the service of God.

DEUT. v. 32. *Ye shall observe to do therefore.* Again, in this verse also, he does not merely exhort the people to embrace the Law, but at the same time enjoins them to be content with its unadulterated teaching; and, in fact, to receive as just and right whatever God has commanded, is only to be half obedient, unless men also put this restraint upon themselves, not to import anything else, (in addition to His Law.) So, also, in another passage, which I have subjoined, God no less severely forbids additions to it than taking away from it; and this is a declaration deserving our especial observation, because, in its preposterous wilfulness, the whole world almost is carried away into false religions; which, nevertheless, God has briefly condemned in a single word, when He commands His people so to acquiesce in His appointed Law that they may not seek to be more righteous than they are taught to be. There is a similar passage at the end of Deut. xii. (ver. 32,) but, because it is connected with a particular circumstance, and depends on the preceding passage, it will be more conveniently reserved for consideration in that place. He adds, in conclusion, that they will not satisfy the Law unless they keep themselves within its bounds; and in order that they may be more disposed to obedience, he gently attracts them by subjoining the promise.[1]

DEUT. XIII. 18. *When thou shalt hearken.* Although this sentence depends on something else, (as may be seen by referring to it,) yet is it general, and extends to the commendation of the whole Law. Moses teaches first, that the rule

[1] "La promesse accoustumée;" the usual promise.—*Fr.*

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of a holy life must be sought from the mouth of God ; and then adds that He must be obeyed not partially, but universally. He confirms also what I have said respecting obedience, for men only please God when they listen to His voice. Moreover, the expression is worth our notice, wherein Moses only assumes for himself the character of a minister, and claims power for God alone; for he says that he commands, but expressly explains that the commandments which he sets before them are God's.

DEUTERONOMY, CHAPTER IV.

5. Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the Lord my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it.

6. Keep therefore, and do *them:* for this *is* your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, surely this great nation *is* a wise and understanding people.

7. For what nation *is there so* great, who *hath* God *so* nigh unto them, as the Lord our God *is* in all *things that* we call upon him *for?*

8. And what nation *is there so* great, that hath statutes and judgments *so* righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?

9. Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life; but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons:

10. *Specially* the day that thou stoodest before the Lord thy God in Horeb, when the Lord said unto me, Gather me the people together, and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and *that* they may teach their children.

11. And ye came near, and stood

5. Videte, docui vos statuta et judicia, sicut præcepit mihi Jehova Deus meus, ut sic faciatis in medio terræ, ad quam vos ingredimini ut possideatis eam.

6. Custodietis itaque, et facietis: quia hæc est sapientia vestra et intelligentia vestra coram populis : qui dum audierint omnia statuta hæc, dicent, Certe populus hic sapiens et intelligens est gens hæc magna.

7. Quæ enim gens tam magna est cui sic appropinquent dii, sicut Jehova Deus noster in quibuscunque invocamus eum ?

8. Et quæ gens est tam magna cui sint statuta et judicia justa, sicut est universa hæc lex, quam ego propono hodie coram oculis vestris ?

2. Veruntamen cave tibi, et custodi animam tuam sollicite, ne obliviscaris rerum quas viderunt oculi tui, neve recedant e corde tuo cunctis diebus vitæ tuæ, et doceas ea filios tuos et filios filiorum tuorum.

10. Die quo stetisti coram Jehova Deo tuo in Horeb, quum diceret Jehova mihi, Congrega mihi populum, ut recenseam illis verba mea, quæ discent, ut timeant me omnibus diebus quibus vixerint super terram, et filios suos doceant.

11. Itaque accessistis, et stetistis

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under the mountain; and the mountain burned with fire unto the midst of heaven, with darkness, clouds, and thick darkness.

12. And the Lord spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude; only *ye heard* a voice.

13. And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, *even* ten commandments; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone.

14. And the Lord commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and judgments, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go over to possess it.

sub monte: (mons autem ille ardebat igni usque ad medium cœli, tenebræ, nubes, et caligo.)

12. Et loquutus est Jehova ad vos e medio ignis: vocem verborum vos audiebatis, at imaginem ullam non videbatis præter vocem.

13. Et renuntiavit vobis pactum suum quod præcepit vobis, ut faceretis, decem verba, et scripsit illa in duabus tabulis lapideis.

14. Mihi quoque præcepit Jehova eodem tempore ut docerem vos statuta et judicia, ut faceretis ea in terra ad quam transitis ut possideatis eam.

6. *Keep therefore, and do them.* In order that they may set themselves more cheerfully about the keeping of the Law, and may proceed more steadily in this endeavour, he reminds them that nothing is better or more desirable for themselves. For God is not duly honoured, except with ready minds and voluntary obedience, to which we are rather attracted by pleasure than forced by rigour and violence. Now, since all desire to excel, he says, that this is the chief excellence of Israel, that they have God for their Lawgiver and Master. If any object that what he says may be refuted by two arguments, namely, because the Law of God was unknown to heathen nations; and because the form of God's worship prescribed in it, and the whole Jewish religion, was not only despised but hated by them; I reply, that other nations are not here absolutely stated to be the judges or arbitrators, but that the words must be thus understood, viz., that there will be no nation, if it should come to a right understanding, which will dare to compare itself, much less to prefer itself to you; for by the very comparison it will acknowledge to what a height of dignity God has raised you. Wherefore, although the doctrine of the Law should remain neglected, nay, detested, by almost all the world, still Moses with truth declares, that since God has deigned to deliver to the Jews a rule of life, a stage had been erected before other nations, whereon the nobility of that one people would be conspicuous. For it was unrea-

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sonable that the glory of God should be tarnished or extinguished by the ignorance of the blind. But we gather from this passage that we then are truly wise, when we depend on God's words, and submit our feeling to His revelations. Where I have rendered the words, "Surely (*certo*) this people," the Hebrew particle, רַק,[1] *rak*, is used, which is often applied in an exclusive sense, so that it would appropriately bear this meaning: "*Only* this people," &c. Unquestionably, the eminent condition of the people, on account of their gracious privileges, is referred to.

7. *For what nation is there so great?* Moses now repeats in his own name what he had stated in the person of others, as if to shew by additional reasons, that not without cause would the Jews be celebrated in the whole world, because it would actually appear that none were equal to them. He mentions two points, first, because God would be ready to afford them help, as often as they call upon Him; secondly, because He had instructed them in perfect righteousness, beyond which nothing could be desired; for, when he says that God is "nigh unto them," I refer it to the presence of His power, which had been abundantly manifested by many miracles. Justly does he deny that the Gentiles had ever experienced such aid from their gods, since their prayers and cries were offered to deaf and dead idols.

9. *Only take heed to thyself.* The same particle, רַק, *rak*, of which I have just spoken, is used here, and its meaning in this place is, as if Moses had said, that this *only* remained; unless it is preferred to translate it *nevertheless.* What follows means literally "Guard (*custodi*) thyself, and guard thy soul;" wherein Moses advances by degrees, reminding them that they needed no common heedfulness, but that they must beware with extreme vigilance and diligence lest they should fail through the want of them; for the slothfulness of the flesh must be spurred on by such instigations as these, and at the same time our weakness must be fortified, and we must take measures against our unsteadfastness; for nothing is more easy than that all our zeal should suddenly be for-

[1] Only; at least; surely.—*Nold. Concord. partic.*—*W.*

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gotten, or should gradually grow cold. God had established the certainty of His law, as far as was necessary, for the grateful and attentive, yet not without reason does He desire the people to remember how great is the carelessness of men. Nor does he command those only to remember who were eye-witnesses, but also to hand down (what they had seen) to their sons and grandsons, that the memory of such remarkable things might be preserved.

10. *The day*[1] *that thou stoodest.* The word *day* might be taken in the accusative, as if in apposition. It is, at any rate, clear that he explains more fully what he had briefly alluded to before, for he summons the people as eye-witnesses, lest, perchance, they should object that they were not sure from whence Moses had derived what he professes to be enjoined him by God. For they were all well aware that he had undertaken nothing without the express command of God. Finally, he proves, from the end and object itself of the doctrine, that God was its author, since it tended to nothing else but that God should be purely served, and that His people might be obedient, than which nothing can be imagined more just and right.

11. *And ye came near, and stood.* This explanatory narrative is intended to prove the same thing, viz., that Moses was only the ambassador and minister of God, because the mountain burned in the sight of all the people, that God might be manifested, speaking from the midst of the fire. His statement that they only heard the voice, but saw no similitude, may be understood as a kind of admission, (*concessionis.*) Thus the two clauses would be read adversatively, "Although no similitude appeared, yet a voice penetrated even to your ears." But I conceive that this was expressly stated more clearly to shew that it was the voice of God, and not proceeding from a human being; for no man could have so concealed himself by artifice as to prevent himself from being seen to speak, whereas they behold the voice come out of the fire without any external instrumentality.

32. For ask now of the days that are past, which were before thee, since the day that God created man

32. Interroga agedum de diebus antiquis, qui fuerunt ante te, ex quo die creavit Deus hominem super

[1] "In the day," &c.—*Lat.*

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upon the earth; and *ask* from the one side of heaven unto the other, whether there hath been *any such thing* as this great thing *is*, or hath been heard like it?

33. Did *ever* people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live?

34. Or hath God assayed to go *and* take him a nation from the midst of *another* nation, by temptations, by signs, and by wonders, and by war, and by a mighty hand, and by a stretched-out arm, and by great terrors, according to all that the Lord your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes?

35. Unto thee it was shewed, that thou mightest know that the Lord he *is* God; *there is* none else beside him.

36. Out of heaven he made thee to hear his voice, that he might instruct thee; and upon earth he shewed thee his great fire; and thou heardest his words out of the midst of the fire.

37. And because he loved thy fathers, therefore he chose their seed after them, and brought thee out in his sight with his mighty power out of Egypt;

38. To drive out nations from before thee greater and mightier than thou *art*, to bring thee in, to give thee their land *for* an inheritance, as *it is* this day.

39. Know therefore this day, and consider *it* in thine heart, that the Lord he *is* God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: *there is* none else.

40. Thou shalt keep therefore his statutes, and his commandments, which I command thee this day, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee, and that thou mayest prolong *thy* days upon the earth, which the Lord thy God giveth thee, for ever.

terram, et ab extremo cœli, usque ad extremum cœli, an acciderit unquam aliquid secundum hanc rem magnam, vel auditum fuerit simile.

33. An audierit populus vocem Dei loquentis e medio ignis, sicut tu audisti, et fuerit superstes.

34. Vel an tentaverit Deus ut veniret ad gentem sibi assumendam e medio gentis, per probationes, signa et prodigia, prælia, manum fortem, brachium extentum, et visiones magnas, secundum omnia quæ vobiscum egit Jehova Deus vester in Ægypto coram oculis vestris.

35. Tibi ostensum est ut cognosceres quod Jehova ipse est Deus, nec ullus præter ipsum.

36. E cœlis audire te fecit vocem suam, ut erudiret te: et in terra ostendit tibi ignem suum magnum, et verba ejus audisti e medio ignis.

37. Et quia dilexit patres tuos, elegit semen eorum post eos, et eduxit te coram facie sua, in virtute sua magna ex Egypto.

38. Ut expelleret gentes magnas a facie tua, et robustiores te, ac te introduceret ad dandam tibi terram earum in hæreditatem, sicut dies hæc demonstrat.

39. Itaque scito hodie, et reduc ad cor tuum, quod Jehova est Deus in cœlis sursum, et super terram deorsum, nec alius ultra.

40. Proinde observabis statuta ejus, et præcepta ejus, quæ mando tibi hodie, ut bene sit tibi et filiis tuis post te, utque prolonges dies super terram quam Jehova Deus tuus dat tibi omnibus diebus.

32. *For ask now.* Moses here more forcibly extols and pronounces magnificent praises upon the miracles which he

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had before more simply related to have taken place at the promulgation of the Law, his object being to produce a fuller conviction of its dignity. He magnifies, too, by comparison, the testimonies whereby its authority had been ratified, viz., because nothing like it had ever occurred; for if any such instance had previously taken place, some portion of its preciousness or honour would have been taken from it. But since from the beginning of the world only one such illustrious manifestation of His power had been given by God, it afforded the greater sanction to the Law. He adds, too, that if they were to search over the whole world they would nowhere find anything similar. For I do not approve of the more refined exposition which some give of this clause, as if he said that all creatures above and below were witnesses that God's might had never been manifested by so many and such illustrious miracles; as also the sense appears too restricted which others give, understanding "the days that are past" to mean annals or chronicles; for I make no question that Moses simply desires them to inquire and to examine whether from the creation of the world, or in any most remote region, any such thing had come to pass.

33. *Did ever people hear?* He points out more openly the greatness and extraordinary transcendency of the matter which he has just mentioned, viz., that they heard the voice of God speaking out of the fire. It is true, indeed, that the superstitions of the Gentiles had been confirmed of old by many apparitions, yet amongst the portents which wretched men have imagined for their willing self-deception, there is nothing approaching to this miracle. Many have individually lied, and their false and foolish tales have been rashly believed; but here we have not to do with unfounded and scattered rumours, nor with the dreams of some single person, but Moses produces more than 700,000 witnesses, to whom God's glory had clearly and certainly appeared; he subjoins, therefore, that God had never assayed to do the same, but had afforded this solitary instance to render His Law illustrious in all ages.[1] Yet in this verse he not only alludes to the promulgation of the Law, but to the whole course of their

[1] Ce chef-d'-œuvre unique.—*Fr.*

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deliverance, since he names in general His "temptations and signs." He says that God "took him a nation from the midst of *another* nation," for by His incomparable power He rescued the descendants of Abraham, who, though dispersed through Egypt, and, as it were, enclosed in its bowels, were yet an obscure and ignoble part of a most famous nation; whereof no similar example is to be found.[1]

35. *Unto thee it was shewed.* He first says that God had so proved His divinity by miracles and prodigies, that the Israelites might know certainly that He was God. Whence, too, he concludes that He is the only God; for although God's holy name be torn in pieces by various opinions, whilst each one manufactures his own gods for himself, yet is it still sure that the power and dominion of God cannot be withdrawn from Him, but reside in a single *subject*, as the logicians say. Therefore the essence of the one God overthrows and annihilates all the other deities which we foolishly invent for ourselves. And this we must carefully remark, for this has been the common error of all ages, to seek for a mixture of many gods, whereas all these imaginations should vanish before the brightness of the true God. In the following verse he confirms this declaration, because God instructed His people out of heaven, and in the fire. Is it, however, asked how these two points accord which seem to be opposed to each other, that God's voice was heard from heaven and from the midst of the fire? I reply, that Moses simply means that the voice which flowed out of the fire into the people's ears was distinguished by plain indications which proved it to be heavenly.

37. *And because he loved.* These words admit of two meanings; for the copulative conjunction stands at the beginning of the verse,—"*And* because he loved thy fathers," and also before the next clause, "*and* he chose their seed;" the reasons here assigned might, therefore, be taken in

[1] Addition in the *Fr.*, "Si quelqu'un aime mieux prendre le nombre singulier pour le pluriel, lors le sens sera tel: Combien que tous peuples fussent pareils, ou d'estat indifferent quant a leur nature, neantmoins que Dieu en a pris un d'entre tous les autres;" if any should prefer taking the singular number instead of the plural, then the sense will be, Although all people were equal, or of the same condition by nature, nevertheless God chose out one of them from amongst all the others.

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connection with the previous sentence, viz., that so many miracles were wrought because God had chosen Abraham and his seed. Others understand it differently, that this people was honoured with so many blessings by God because He loved their fathers. In this case they omit the *copula* in the middle of the verse, as must be often done. In the main, there is little discrepancy; for Moses desires to shew that whatever good things God has conferred upon His people are gratuitous, by which circumstance he commends God's grace the more. He had said that by unusual favour this nation was taken from the midst of another; and he now adds that this was done on no other account but because God had embraced Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob with His love, and persevered in the same love towards their posterity. But we must remark that by the word "love" is expressed that favour which springs of mere generosity, so as to exclude all worthiness in the person beloved, as may be more clearly gathered from other passages, viz., Deut. vii. 8, and Psalm lxxviii. 68, and as is pretty plain from the context here, wherein he attributes the election of the people to the love with which God had honoured their fathers. If any object that God's election is eternal, the objection is readily solved, for the seed of Abraham was separated from all nations, because God had gratuitously adopted their father. We now understand the meaning of Moses, that the deliverance of the people was only to be ascribed to God's goodness. He thus amplifies this blessing by another circumstance, viz., that God had preferred to great and mighty nations this ignoble people, whose own proper worthiness could not have acquired His favour.

39. *Know therefore this day.* He again inculcates what we have lately spoken of, that the glory of the one true God was proved by the miracles, but he does so by way of exhortation. For he desires them carefully and attentively to consider what God had shewn them, because in so plain a matter there would be no excuse for error or ignorance. He therefore infers from what had gone before, that the people must beware of shutting their eyes against the clear revelation of God's power, and therefore urges them to keep

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it in memory, because man's ingratitude is but too prone to forgetfulness. He afterwards reminds them wherefore God would be known, viz., that they might keep His Law and obey His statutes. The sum is, that they would be inexcusable if they did not obediently receive the Law, which they knew to have come from God; for they must needs be worse than stupid if the majesty of God, known and understood by so many proofs, did not awaken them to reverence. And lest they should undervalue the doctrine as proceeding from a mortal man, he expressly confesses, indeed, that he is the minister, and yet that he had set before them nothing which he had not received from God.

DEUTERONOMY, CHAPTER VII.

6. For thou *art* an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that *are* upon the face of the earth.

7. The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; (for ye *were* the fewest of all people;)

8. But because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bond-men, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

6. Nam populus sanctus es Jehovæ Deo tuo: te elegit Jehova Deus tuus, ut sis illi populus peculiaris ex omnibus populis qui sunt in superficie terræ.

7. Non quia plures essetis præ omnibus populis, amavit vos Jehova, et elegit vos: (vos enim eratis pauciores omnibus populis.)

8. Sed quia diligebat vos Jehova, et custodire volebat juramentum quod juraverat patribus vestris, eduxit vos Jehova in manu forti, et redemit vos e manu Pharaonis regis Ægypti.

DEUT. X. 14. Behold, the heaven, and the heaven of heavens, *is* the Lord's thy God, the earth *also*, with all that therein *is*.

15. Only the Lord had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, *even* you above all people, as *it is* this day.

16. Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiff-necked.

17. For the Lord your God *is* God of gods, and Lord of lords, a

14. Ecce, Jehovæ Dei tui sunt cœli, et cœli cœlorum, terra et omnia quæ in ea sunt.

15. Tantummodo in patribus tuis beneplacitum est Jehovæ, ut diligeret eos: et elegit semen eorum post eos, *nempe* vos, ex omnibus populis, sicut hodie.

16. Circumcidite igitur præputium cordis vestri, et cervicem vestram ne induretis ultra.

17. Jehova enim Deus vester est, Deus deorum, et Dominus domino-

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great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward.

rum, Deus magnus, potens et terribilis.

DEUT. VII. 6. *For thou art a holy people.* He explains more distinctly what we have lately seen respecting God's gratuitous love; for the comparison of the fewness of the people with the whole world and all nations, illustrates in no trifling degree the greatness of God's grace; and this subject is considerably enlarged upon. Almost the same expressions will very soon be repeated, and also in the Song of Moses; but there by way of reproof, whilst here it is directed to a different object, as is plain from the context, viz., that they might be, by so great a blessing, laid under obligation to devote themselves and their services to God. He begins by declaring the end of their election, viz., that God had deigned to bestow this peculiar honour upon them that He might acquire unto Himself a holy people, pure from all pollutions, and then, by adding the circumstance I have adverted to, he magnifies the excellence of the benefit. From his argument drawn from their dignity, that they ought therefore to labour after holiness, we gather, that in proportion to the abundance of grace with which any one is endued, he is solemnly bound to live piously and justly. For God does not wish the gifts He bestows upon us to lie idle, but to produce their appropriate fruits; and we must especially remember that when He adopts us, and gathers us into His Church, we are not "called to uncleanness," but to purity of life, and to shew forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light." (1 Thess. iv. 7, and 1 Pet. ii. 9.) The Hebrew word סְגֻלָּה, *segullah*, which we translate "*peculiaris*," *special*, some understand to mean a "treasure," or a precious and desirable thing, as was stated on Exodus xix. Undoubtedly it appears from many passages that gold, silver, pearls, and the like, are designated by this word; but substantially it is agreed that this title is given to the elect people, because God delights Himself in them; and herein His incomparable goodness shines forth, that He so highly esteems such miserable and worthless creatures, (*homunciones.*) Hence,

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too, it appears that by His holy calling He, as it were, creates out of nothing "things which are not," that they may excel every earthly being.

7. *The Lord did not set his love upon you.* He proves it to be of God's gratuitous favour, that He has exalted them to such high honour, because He had passed over all other nations, and deigned to embrace them alone. For an equal distribution of God's gifts generally casts obscurity upon them in our eyes; thus the light of the sun, our common food, and other things, which all equally enjoy, either lose their value, or, at any rate, do not obtain their due honour; whilst what is peculiar is more conspicuous. Moreover, Moses takes it for granted, that there was nothing naturally in the people to cause their condition to be better or more distinguished; and hence infers, that there was no other reason why God should choose them, except His mere choice of them. We have elsewhere observed, that by this His love, whatever men would bring of their own is excluded or annihilated. It follows, therefore, that the Israelites could never be sufficiently grateful to God, since they had been thus liberally dealt with by Him, without any desert of their own.

8. *Because he would keep the oath.* The love of God is here referred back from the children to the fathers; for he addressed the men of his own generation, when he said that they were therefore God's treasure, because He loved them; now he adds that God had not just begun to love them for the first time, but that He had originally loved their fathers, when He chose to adopt Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But although he more clearly proves that the descendants of Abraham had deserved nothing of the kind, because they are God's peculiar people only by right of inheritance, still it must be remarked that God was induced to be kind to Abraham by no other cause than mere generosity. A little further on, therefore, he will say that those who then survived were dear to God, because He had already loved their fathers. But now he still further commends the goodness of God, because He had handed down His covenant from the fathers to the children, to shew that He is

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faithful and true to His promises. At the end of the verse, he teaches that the deliverance of the people was both an effect and a testimony of that grace.

DEUT. X. 14. *Behold the heaven.* He again enforces upon them the grace, on account of which we have seen that the people were under obligation to God; because this was the most effectual observation for moving them to submit themselves to their deliverer, to whom they were reminded that they owed altogether themselves and all that they had. First, then, he admonishes them that they differed from others, not by their personal dignity, nor the excellency of their race, but because it pleased God to prefer them, when He ruled equally over all. Literally it is, "Jehovah coveted to love your fathers," by which expression, as may be gathered from many passages, the feeling of inclination to love them is undoubtedly marked. Jerome, therefore, has not aptly used the word "*adhere.*"[1] Now, this desire, whereby God was freely and liberally induced, Moses opposes to all other causes, lest Israel should arrogate anything to themselves or their fathers. We must also remark the comparison between the less and the greater; for this was inestimable condescension, that he should in a manner pass by the heaven and earth with all their beauty and abundance, and set His heart upon a few obscure men. To this the limitation refers, that of all people He chose the seed of Abraham alone; for the word רַק, *rak*, is here used *exclusively*, therefore, I have translated it "tantummodo," only; unless it should be thought better to render it "But," or "And yet." The meaning, however, is clear, that God, having disregarded all the nations of the earth, had gratuitously adopted Abraham and his race. For he says that not only were their fathers loved, but all their descendants in their persons; since otherwise the exhortation which follows would not be suitable.

16. *Circumcise, therefore.* From this inference it appears wherefore mention was made of this adoption, viz., that the Jews should more earnestly and solemnly serve God, whom they had known from experience to be so gracious. He

[1] Conglutinatus est.—*V.*

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requires, then, a reciprocal love; for nothing could be more base than not to testify their gratitude by a pious and righteous life. But, because men are by no means inclined or disposed to obey God, Moses exhorts them to self-renunciation, and to subdue and correct their carnal affections; for to circumcise the heart is equivalent to cleansing it from wicked lusts. Meanwhile, he reproves their former perverseness, when he desires them to be no more stiff-necked; as much as to say, that now at last they should put off that depravity of mind, wherein they had too long hardened themselves. We now perceive the design of Moses. He would have his fellow-Israelites submissive and obedient to God, who, by His great goodness, had furnished them with the motive. But, because hitherto they had repaid His kindnesses with ingratitude, at the same time, he enjoins them to amend their conduct. In the first clause, he alludes to the rite appointed by the Law; for circumcision is, as it were, the solemn consecration, whereby the children of Abraham were initiated unto the worship of God and true piety, and at the same time were separated from heathen nations, to be His holy and peculiar people; and they were to be admitted to this elementary rite in their infancy, that by its visible sign they might learn that the defilements of the flesh and the world were to be renounced. There were also other objects in circumcision, but here reference is only made to newness of life, or repentance (*resipiscentia*). Wherefore, the conclusion is, that since God had chosen them as His people, and by an external sign had devoted them to the cultivation of holiness, they ought sincerely and really to prove that they differed from heathen nations, and that they were circumcised in spirit, no less than in the flesh. For Paul declares, that they alone are truly Jews who are circumcised "inwardly," as he says, and not those who only have to boast of "the letter" of circumcision. (Rom. ii. 28, 29.) Wherefore, the Prophets frequently taunt the transgressors of the Law by calling them uncircumcised, although they bore the visible sign in their flesh. In fine, when he desires to exhort them to sanctify themselves to God, he reasons from the nature and use of the sign, where-

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by they professed themselves to be His chosen people. In the second clause, there is an elegant metaphor, of frequent occurrence, taken from oxen; for, since the oxen which quietly offer their necks to the yoke are easily subdued to obedience, those are said to be "stiff-necked" (*durœ cervicis*) which are fierce and obstinate in their nature.

17. *For the Lord your God.* Lest they should despise this teaching, he reminds them of God's awful power; for the cause of contempt and negligence is, that the majesty of God does not always obtain its due reverence. Wherefore he inspires them with fear, to deter them from self-indulgence and indifference.

DEUTERONOMY, CHAPTER XXVII.

9. And Moses, and the priests the Levites, spake unto all Israel, saying, Take heed, and hearken, O Israel; This day thou art become the people of the Lord thy God.

10. Thou shalt therefore obey the voice of the Lord thy God, and do his commandments and his statutes, which I command thee this day.

9. Et loquutus est Moses et sacerdotes Levitæ ad omnem Israel, dicendo, Ausculta et audi Israel, hodie factus es in populum Jehovæ Deo tuo.

10. Audias ergo vocem Dei tui, et facias præcepta ejus, et statuta ejus quæ ego præcipio tibi hodie.

The ground of his exhortation is again taken from the special favour of adoption, wherewith the God of Abraham had honoured them; for there was nothing which should have more effectually stimulated them to obedience, than that more than paternal love, and the gratuitous kindness with which He had prevented them. Although, at the same time, they were admonished in these words of the object for which they were separated from other nations; for the conclusion he draws is, that because they were received by God as His people, they, therefore, lay under an obligation to keep His statutes; as Paul more plainly teaches us that we are redeemed from all iniquity, that Christ might purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. (Tit. ii. 14.) Moreover, since the priests were now appointed, from whose lips the doctrine of the law was to be sought, they here come forward in God's own name, and engage the

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people to respond to His generous calls upon them; and not only this, but also to obey His ministers.

DEUTERONOMY, CHAPTER XXVI.

16. This day the Lord thy God hath commanded thee to do these statutes and judgments: thou shalt therefore keep and do them with all thine heart, and with all thy soul.

17. Thou hast avouched the Lord this day to be thy God, and to walk in his ways, and to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and to hearken unto his voice:

18. And the Lord hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people, as he hath promised thee, and that *thou* shouldest keep all his commandments;

19. And to make thee high above all nations which he hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honour; and that thou mayest be an holy people unto the Lord thy God, as he hath spoken.

16. Hodie Jehova Deus tuus præcepit tibi ut facias statuta hæc et judicia: custodias ergo et facias ea toto corde tuo, et tota anima tua.

17. Jehovam exaltasti hodie, quod tibi sit in Deum, et ambules in viis ejus, et custodias statuta ejus, et præcepta ejus, et judicia ejus: et obedias voci ejus.

18. Jehova quoque exaltavit te hodie quod sis ei in populum peculiarem, quemadmodum loquutus est tibi, et quod custodias omnia præcepta ejus.

19. Et ponat te superiorem omnibus gentibus quas fecit, ad laudem, et nomen, et gloriam: et ut sis populus sanctus Jehovæ Deo tuo, quemadmodum dixit.

16. *This day the Lord thy God.* He again reminds them that God is the author of the Law, in order that His majesty should the more impress them; and not only so, but that, since the Law was specially delivered to them, its observation was the more enjoined upon them. Hence he exhorts them earnestly to apply their hearts to those things which God had enjoined them to keep, because men grow careless in their duties, unless they are often stirred up. For, undoubtedly, God indirectly rebukes the people's indifference, by so often calling them to obedience. By the words "with all thy soul" is meant serious apprehension, and carefulness, as well as sincerity, free from all disguise and deceit. For nothing is more displeasing to God than hypocrisy, because He seeth the heart. If any object that it was vain to demand of them what no mortal can perform, viz., to keep the Law with all their heart, I reply, that *all* the heart is opposed to a double or divided heart, and is equivalent to entire, or altogether without deceit,

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although (as we shall hereafter see) it is not absurd to propose to believers an object, at which they are to aim, although they may not attain to it as long as the weakness of the flesh hinders them.

17. *Thou hast avouched the Lord.*[1] He shews them from the consequence that nothing can be better or more desirable for them than to embrace God's Law; for nothing can be more honourable to ourselves than to give to God His due honour, and to exalt His glory to its due pre-eminence. Moses declares that, if the Israelites submit themselves to the Law, this will be, as it were, to place Him in His rightful dignity; and he promises that the fruit of it will return to them, for that God, on his part, will exalt them, so that they shall far excel all other nations; as it is said in Isaiah, (viii. 13, 14,) "Sanctify the Lord of hosts—and he shall be for a sanctuary." For no otherwise does He desire to be glorified by us, than to make us in turn partakers of His glory; and thus Moses gently entices them to receive the Law, because their solid happiness consists in this pious duty, if they altogether devote themselves to obedience. But this excellency of the Church, although it shines forth in the world, is still hidden from the blind, and, since it is spiritual, only obtains its praise before God and the angels.

DEUTERONOMY, CHAPTER VI.

20. *And* when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What *mean* the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgments, which the Lord our God hath commanded you?

21. Then thou shalt say unto thy son, We were Pharaoh's bond-men in Egypt, and the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand:

22. And the Lord shewed signs and wonders, great and sore, upon Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon all his household, before our eyes:

23. And he brought us out from thence, that he might bring us in, to give us the land which he sware unto our fathers.

20. Quum interrogaverit te filius tuus cras, dicendo, Quid sibi volunt testimonia et statuta et judicia, quæ præcepit Jehova Deus noster vobis.

21. Tunc dices filio tuo, Servi fuimus Pharaonis in Ægypto, et eduxit nos Jehova ex Ægypto in manu forti.

22. Deditque Jehova signa et portenta magna et pessima in Ægypto in Pharaonem, et in totam domum ejus, in oculis nostris.

23. Atque nos eduxit inde, ut introduceret nos, ac daret nobis terram de qua juravit patribus nostris.

[1] Thou hast exalted, &c.—*Lat.*

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24. And the Lord commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the Lord our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as *it is* at this day.

25. And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the Lord our God, as he hath commanded us.

24. Itaque præcepit Jehova ut faciamus omnia statuta ista, ut timeamus Jehovam Deum nostrum in bonum nostrum omnibus diebus, ut conservaret nos in vita, ut in hac die.

25. Et justitia erit nobis quum custodierimus ut faciamus omne præceptum istud coram Jehova Deo nostro, quemadmodum præcepit nobis.

20. *And when thy son asketh thee.* The sole point which Moses urges in these verses is, that the people should testify their gratitude by obeying the Law, and that the same religion,[1] which he commands the fathers to teach, should descend to their posterity. The sum is, that there was good reason why all the precepts of the Law should be observed, since by them it was that God desired His people, after their deliverance, to shew forth their sense of His loving-kindness. Again, therefore, in this passage, he commends the Law by reminding them of their redemption, that the people might more willingly and more earnestly reverence it; for its authority has stronger claims upon them, because it was not imposed before God had laid them under obligation to Himself; and it would have been too base and absurd in them to refuse God as their Lawgiver, when they knew that by Him they had been purchased to Himself. In the next place He reminds them that for the same object they had been constituted the heirs of the land of Canaan, that they should honour God as the author of this special favour; thus he concludes that they are bound by a two-fold tie, for God had devoted them to Himself not once only, but had confirmed His dominion over them by their continued possession of the land. But there is nothing inconsistent in his saying that the land was promised by oath to their fathers before the Law was given; for, although God bestowed this gift gratuitously, yet did He justly claim the testimony of their gratitude; just as now-a-days, although He invites us to the hope of an eternal inheritance of His own free bounty, yet the end of our calling is, that we on our part should celebrate His glory all our life long. When in verse 24 he uses

[1] Addition in *Fr.*, "qu'il a apprinse de Dieu;" which they have learnt of God.

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the words "to fear the Lord our God," he briefly defines the sum of the Law; for it would not suffice for us to perform whatever is there commanded, unless our obedience had reference to the fear and worship of God. Integrity and uprightness, indeed, give God delight; but none will say that men's life is duly ordered, if, whilst they exercise equity one towards another, they defraud God of His right. But it is well known that legitimate honour and worship are comprehended under the name of fear. Just afterwards, he commends the Law on account of its profitableness; for God provided for their own good, in delivering to them the rule of a just and pious life. In these words he intimates that they would be doubly ungrateful if they rejected what God meant for their own advantage. For this expression, "for our good," is equivalent to saying that God not only had respect and care for His own rights in enacting the Law, but at the same time regarded what would be useful to them; and this he more clearly states in the next verse, where he says that "this shall be their righteousness if they observe" the Law; otherwise, that the rule of a righteous life, which would please God, was prescribed to them, than which nothing better could be desired. But it will be elsewhere shewn at greater length how the keeping of the Law is in itself righteousness, and yet that no man is justified by the Law; for, that the Law brings only wrath and condemnation, does not arise from any defect or faultiness in its doctrine, but must be imputed to our own guilt, as being far removed, nay, aliens from the righteousness[1] which it contains.

NUMBERS, CHAPTER XV.

37. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

38. Speak unto the children of Israel, and bid them that they make them fringes in the borders of their garments, throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a ribband of blue:

37. Dixit Jehova ad Mosen, dicendo:

38. Alloquere filios Israel, et dic eis ut faciant sibi fimbrias in angulis vestimentorum suorum, per generationes suas, et ponant in fimbria anguli filum hyacinthinum.

[1] La doctrine.—*Fr.*

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39. And it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the Lord, and do them; and that ye seek not after your own heart, and your own eyes, after which ye use to go a whoring:

40. That ye may remember, and do all my commandments, and be holy unto your God.

41. I *am* the Lord your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I *am* the Lord your God.

39. Et erit vobis instar fimbriarum, videbitisque eam, et recordabimini omnium præceptorum Jehovæ, ut faciatis ea: et non aspicietis post cor vestrum, et oculos vestros, post quos vos fornicamini.

40. Ut recordemini, *inquam*, et faciatis omnia præcepta, et sitis sancti Deo vestro.

41. Ego Jehova Deus vester, qui eduxi vos e terra Ægypti, ut essem vobis in Deum: ego, *inquam*, Jehova Deus vester.

REPETITION OF THE SAME COMMAND.

DEUT. vi. 6. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart;

7. And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

8. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.

9. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

6. Erunt verba hæc quæ ego præcipio tibi hodie, in corde tuo.

7. Et iterabis (*vel*, acues) ea filiis tuis, et disseres de ipsis sedens domi tuæ, iter faciens, jacens in lecto, et surgens.

8. Et ligabis ea in signum in manu tua: et erunt in frontalia inter oculos tuos.

9. Scribes quoque ea in postibus domus tuæ, et in portis tuis.

ANOTHER REPETITION.

DEUT. xi. 18. Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart, and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes.

19. And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

20. And thou shalt write them upon the door-posts of thine house, and upon thy gates.

EXOD. xxiii. 13. And in all *things* that I have said unto you be circumspect: and make no mention of the name of other gods, neither let it be heard out of thy mouth.

18. Ponite verba hæc in corde vestro, et animo vestro, atque ea ligate in signum in manu vestra, sintque in frontalia inter oculos vestros.

19. Et docete ea filios vestros, et loquamini de eis quum sedebis domi tuæ, et quum ambulabis per viam: quumque jacebis in lecto, et quum surges.

20. Scribes quoque ea in postibus domus tuæ, et in portis tuis.

13. In omnibus quæ præcepi vobis, cauti eritis.

NUMBERS XV. 38. *Speak unto the children of Israel.* A little farther on I will explain the object of this precept

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more fully: although it is plain from the next verse that God had no other object but to exercise the Jews in constant meditation upon the Law. For there was no religion contained in the fringes themselves, nor had that material texture any value in itself; but since men are lazy and forgetful in the cultivation of piety, God would by this aid make a provision for their infirmity. For when He says that they should "look upon it and remember," He hints that they have need of these coarse rudiments, which may strike even their outward senses; and again, that, unless their memory was kept awake, nothing was more likely than that forgetfulness should steal upon them. But he presently adds, that God has no satisfaction in mere empty knowledge, but that He demands serious affections and practical performance. In the latter part of the verse he points out another requirement, viz., not only that their sluggishness should be stimulated, but also their wantonness restrained; for when he says "that ye seek not after your own heart," he intimates that, unless God should restrain their wandering senses, they would be too much inclined to all kinds of superstitions and errors. And, first of all, by contrasting "the hearts and eyes" of men with His Law, He shews that He would have His people contented with that one rule which He prescribes, without the admixture of any of their own imaginations; and again, He denounces the vanity of whatever men invent for themselves, and however pleasing any human scheme may appear to them, He still repudiates and condemns it. And this is still more clearly expressed in the last word, when he says that men "go a whoring" whenever they are governed by their own counsels. This declaration is deserving of our especial observation, for whilst they have much self-satisfaction who worship God according to their own will, and whilst they account their zeal to be very good and very right, they do nothing else but pollute themselves by spiritual adultery. For what by the world is considered to be the holiest devotion, God with his own mouth pronounces to be fornication. By the word "eyes" he unquestionably means man's power of discernment.

41. *I am the Lord your God.* Having at the end of the

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last verse commanded them to be holy unto their God, he now confirms this command by a reason, viz., that it was for this end that God redeemed them, that He might be their God, *i.e.*, that He might be solemnly honoured. He asserts God's right, then, as founded upon the blessing of their deliverance, which would have been misplaced unless they devoted themselves to His service. The repetition at the conclusion is intended for confirmation.

DEUT. VI. 6. *And these words.* In these four next verses God again commands (as before) the study of His Law. And first, indeed, He would have it implanted in their hearts, lest forgetfulness of it should ever steal over them; and by the word "heart" He designates the memory and other faculties of the mind; as though He had said that this was so great a treasure, that there was good cause why they should hide it in their hearts, or so fix this doctrine deeply in their minds that it should never escape. Afterwards He enjoins that constant conversation should be held about it with their children, in order that fathers should diligently attend and apply themselves to the duty of instruction. The word שָׁנַן,[1] *shanan*, which Moses uses, means properly "to whet." Commentators think that it is employed metaphorically for "to reiterate," or "to repeat constantly," because, when the heavenly doctrine is inculcated, it will scarcely even thus be duly impressed on their hearts; but, since it is here used in the conjugation *Piel*, its signification may be transitive, viz., that they should cause it to penetrate their minds, as if they should prick them with the point of a sword; for the other translation does not seem consistent. But it is sufficient for me to state my opinion, lest any should be offended by its novelty. Lastly, he exhorts them to exercise themselves in its meditation both publicly and privately, in order to stimulate their want of energy. But, although he may seem to speak hyperbolically, yet if any one will carefully consider how slow and careless men are in learning, and how forgetful they are when they seem to have made some progress, he will readily acknowledge that Moses does not urge them so strongly on insufficient grounds, but

[1] Margin of *A. V.*, to whet, or sharpen.—*W.*

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that it was highly necessary for him to be thus rigid in exacting their attention. For this reason the Prophet in Psalm i. 2, pronounces them to be blessed who meditate in God's law "day and night." He leaves, then, no portion of time unoccupied with meditation on the Law; whether they are at home, or abroad, or when they retire to rest, or when they rise in the morning. To this precept David appears to allude in Psalm cxix. 62, where he says, "At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto thee because of thy righteous judgments;" and again, ver. 148, "Mine eyes prevent the night-watches, that I might meditate in thy word." But still, by the expression "talk of them," Moses does not urge the people to empty talkativeness, to which many are too much inclined, but he would have them severally thus establish themselves and be teachers of each other. He enumerates these various engagements, lest that change of occupation by which the mind is wont to be distracted should withdraw the godly from the right path, as though he commanded them to make this their chief aim in whatever business they might be engaged. For the same reason he desires bracelets and frontlets to be made of the precepts of the Law, contrasting doubtless this spiritual ornament with chains[1] of gold, as much as to say that they would more properly take delight in the pious recollection of the Law, than in those trifling ornaments which attract men's senses. The Jews, understanding this literally, accounted this external ostentation a mark of holiness, so as to think that they had almost done all they needed, when they wore the Law on their arms and foreheads. Thence their mistaken zeal proceeded still further, so that, as each desired to be thought better than others, they widened their phylacteries in proportion, for so they denominated the borders of their garments, on which were written certain sentences of the Law, as safeguards. This error our Lord severely reproves in the Scribes and Pharisees, (Matt. xxiii. 5,) because it was a mere mockery of this admonition, and a profanation of its doctrine. The intention of God sufficiently appears in the passage from Exodus, which I have subjoined, and in which they are

[1] A tous joyaux, affiquets, et parures.—*Fr.*

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simply commanded to be diligent in keeping the Law. But there is good reason why diligence should be required, not only on account of the matter being highly important, but because, through our vanity, we are apt to relax our exertions, unless our slowness of heart is stimulated.

DEUT. XI. 18. *Therefore shall ye lay up these my words.* He again demands their serious attention, lest if the doctrine he propounds should be only lightly and carelessly received, it should speedily be let slip; for to lay up in, or on, the heart, is the same as to hide deeply in it; although, where the word "soul" is added, the "heart" refers to the mind, or the intellectual faculties. In fine, he commands them to have the Law not only impressed on the mind, but embraced with sincere affection. In the next place, he commands that aid to the memory which we have just considered, viz., that they should wear the precepts on the arms and foreheads; as if God should constantly meet them, to arouse their senses. For (as has been said) God had no regard to the bands themselves, but would have them seen on their arms and foreheads for another object, viz.,[1] to suggest and renew their care for religion. Again, He appointed them to occupy the place of ornaments, in order to accustom the people to take their chief delight in meditating on the Law. Thus that foolish ambition is sufficiently refuted, when hypocrites sought after a reputation for holiness by their fringes and other fopperies, as well as that gross error of the whole people, in thinking that they discharged their duty to God by their outward dress. What follows afterwards, that the precepts should be written on the gates of their cities, and on their private houses, tends to the same thing; for we have said, that since men's minds are prone to vanity, and are easily distracted by innumerable allurements, they have need of such stays to hold them back. And this object is plainly expressed, when He commands them severally to speak of the precepts of the Law, whether they are sitting at home, or going abroad, or lying down, or rising up; because without

[1] C'est de renouveler aux enfans d'Israel la pensee, qu'ils devoyent avoir de s'enquerir de sa volonte;" to renew in the children of Israel the care they ought to have in inquiring as to His will.—*Fr.*

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diligent exercise, it usually happens that whatever men have once learnt is soon lost. He adds, also, another effect of this diligence, viz., that not only should each of them consult their own individual advantage, but also teach their children, whereby God's Law would ever be maintained in vigour by perpetual succession.

DEUTERONOMY, CHAPTER XXVII.

1. And Moses, with the elders of Israel, commanded the people, saying, Keep all the commandments which I command you this day.

2. And it shall be, on the day when ye shall pass over Jordan unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, that thou shalt set thee up great stones, and plaster them with plaster.

3. And thou shalt write upon them all the words of this law, when thou art passed over; that thou mayest go in unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, a land that floweth with milk and honey; as the Lord God of thy fathers hath promised thee.

4. Therefore it shall be, when ye be gone over Jordan, *that* ye shall set up these stones, which I command you this day, in mount Ebal, and thou shalt plaster them with plaster.

8. And thou shalt write upon the stones all the words of this law very plainly.

1. Et præcepit Moses et seniores Israelis populo, dicendo, Custodi omnia præcepta quæ ego præcipio vobis hodie.

2. Erit, quo die transieritis Jordanem ad terram quam Jehova Deus tuus dat tibi, statues tibi lapides magnos, et lines calce.

3. Et scribes in illis omnia verba Legis hujus, quum transieris ut venias in terram quam Jehova Deus tuus dat tibi, terram fluentem lacte et melle: sicut loquutus est Jehova Deus patrum tuorum tibi.

4. Erit ergo quum transieritis Jordanem, statuetis lapides istos de quibus ego præcipio vobis hodie, et lines eos calce.

8. Et scribes in lapidibus omnia verba Legis hujus (*ad verbum*, bene) distincte explicando.

1. *And Moses, with the elders.* This precept is of the same character as those that have preceded it; for, as God would have His precepts written on the door-posts, and on the borders of their garments, so that they might constantly meet their eyes, so also would He have a monument existing at the very entrance of their land, from which the people might learn that they dwelt in it, in order that they might worship God purely. Wherefore, lest by the people's carelessness the knowledge of the Law should be obscured, or in any way obliterated, God would have its sum inscribed in a

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conspicuous place. Hence may be gathered the similarity I have adverted to between the private houses of individuals and the whole land. When the precepts were written on the doors, every one was admonished that his house was sacred to God, and the same was the case with the whole land, so that whosoever entered it might know that it was, as it were, the sanctuary of heavenly doctrine, and thus their zeal might be stirred up to the pure worship of God. The object of the plain and distinct writing of the Scripture, referred to in verse 8, was to take away (the excuse of[1]) ignorance.

DEUTERONOMY, CHAPTER XXXI.

10. And Moses commanded them, saying, At the end of *every* seven years, in the solemnity of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles,

11. When all Israel is come to appear before the Lord thy God in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing.

12. Gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and thy stranger that *is* within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this law;

13. And *that* their children, which have not known *any thing*, may hear, and learn to fear the Lord your God, as long as ye live in the land whither ye go over Jordan to possess it.

10. Et præcepit Levitis Moses, dicendo, Septimo quoque anno, tempore anni remissionis, in solennitate tabernaculorum,

11. Quum venerit universus Israel ut appareat coram Jehova Deo, in loco quem elegerit, leges Legem istam coram universo Israele in auribus eorum.

12. Congregando populum, viros, et mulieres, parvulos et peregrinos qui sunt intra portas tuas, ut audiant, et discant, timeantque Jehovam Deum vestrum, et custodiant faciendo omnia verba legis hujus.

13. Et filii eorum qui non noverunt audiant, et discant timere Jehovam Deum vestrum, omnibus diebus quibus victuri estis super terram, ad quam transmisso Jordane pergitis ut possideatis.

10. *And Moses commanded them.* The object of this precept is the same as that of the foregoing. He would have (the Law[1]) represented, and constantly kept before their eyes; now He commands that it should also be recited every seventh year, lest the knowledge of it should ever depart. But let us follow the order of the words. First of all, Moses says that "he wrote" the Law. Before this, the doctrines of religion had only been expressed by word of mouth, for their fathers had handed down traditionally to their children

[1] Added from the French.

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whatever had been declared to them from heaven. Thus the religion and faith of the people in Egypt was only founded on ancient revelations (*oraculis*) and the traditions of their fathers. But, forasmuch as nothing is more easy than for men's minds, in their vanity, speedily to forget true doctrine, and to involve themselves in manifold errors, God, willing to provide against this evil, consigned the rule of piety to public records,[1] so that there might be no pretence of ignorance if their posterity should decline from it. Behold, then, the reason why the Law was written down, that God's truth might be witnessed in the continued lapse of ages. He does not mean that the Law was so "delivered" to the Levites, that they should suppress it, or should be its only keepers; but if he had exhorted them all indifferently to read it, scarcely any would have applied themselves to its study; for so it is wont to happen, that individuals neglect what is enjoined generally upon all. Wherefore the Levites are appointed to be the guardians of the Law (*nomophylaces*), to watch diligently, amidst the neglect and contempt of others, lest the knowledge of God should fail. Nor is there any question that the Law was therefore entrusted to their hands, that they might be its interpreters. And to this that passage of Malachi refers, (ii. 7,) "For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the Law at his mouth; for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts." For what is added immediately afterwards, that they should read over the Law every seventh year, cannot properly be taken, as if, during the rest of the time, it should remain hidden among themselves; for God would have them to teach daily, and constantly to remind the people of their duty. But lest this practice should become obsolete, either by the aversion of the people or the laziness of the priests, this solemn rite was added, that every seventh year when the most numerous assembly of the people took place, the promulgation of the Law should be renewed. Whence it appears that nothing is too sacred nor too abundantly fortified by precautions to escape violation and infraction from man's wickedness; for when the recitation of the Law was thus precisely enjoined

[1] En chartes authentiques.—*Fr.*

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upon the Levites, it was surely astonishing and detestable that it should be, as it were, discovered in the time of Josiah, and that all were aroused by its novelty, as if they had never heard of it before. (2 Kings xxii. 3, &c.) Exactly the same thing did not occur under the Papacy; but when its scarecrow[1] bishops desired to domineer and tyrannize, they used the artifice of declaring it unlawful to inquire into the mysteries of Scripture. Hence it was brought about that they might securely addict themselves to their ridiculous follies, and that the monks, their emissaries, might vent with impunity whatever fables came into their heads. But, in fine, the intention of God was that every seventh year the people should be reminded to meditate diligently on the law.

12. *Gather the people together.*[2] Literally, "to gather,"[3] &c., in the infinitive mood; and although this is sometimes taken for the imperative, yet, in this passage some improperly translate it "Gather," &c., as if Moses commanded them to give these injunctions once only to the people of their own generation, whereas he is rather continuing with the foregoing sentence. This verse, then, is connected with what went before, viz., that the Law should be promulgated anew, in the years in which they were to hold their greatest assembly; because the people was then called to the Jubilee by the sound of the trumpet. The word "gather," therefore, extends to all these septennial assemblies, of which mention will be elsewhere made. Nor certainly would what he says of the people that are "within their gates," accord with the times of Moses, since in those days there were none. Consequently he more fully explains why he pointed out the seventh year, viz., because the whole people then came "to appear before God." He specially mentions the "women and children," lest their age or sex might be an excuse; and this heightens the villany and dishonesty of those[4] who

[1] Larvati.—*Lat.* Les Eveques cornus et masquez.—*Fr.*

[2] "Congregando," by congregating.—*Lat.* There is much abridgment of the passage in the French.

[3] הקהל. The form is strictly that of the imperfect Hiphil, whilst the infinitive of the same voice is properly הקהיל, as seen in Numb. x. 7, though its *yod* might be changed into a *tzere*, in which case the form of these two different tenses would be identical.—*W.*

[4] L'audace du Pape et de son clergé.—*Fr.*

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would debar not children only, but women also, from religious learning; since God invites all from the least to the greatest to His school, and would have them to be His disciples. With respect to "the strangers," we must understand not those who had come into the land of Canaan on business, and were soon to return home, but those who had chosen to take up their abode there, and from their long residence had coalesced into the same body with the Israelites. The fruit and utility (of this recitation[1]) is added, that by hearing they might learn to fear God. Whence we infer, that true religion has its origin in knowledge, and that whatever piety men not instructed by God's word may appear to have, is mere pretence. "To observe to do," is equivalent to applying themselves diligently and zealously to obey the precepts of the Law.

13. *And that their children, which have not known anything.* Again, we see that their present assembly is not referred to, but that which was to be repeated every seven years, in order that their posterity might be retained in the path of duty. Another use, then, of this recitation is adduced; that many who, from their age, could not be witnesses of the first promulgation, might thence learn how God was to be served. The possession of the land is again set before them, that God's bounty may attract them to obedience.

DEUTERONOMY, CHAPTER VI.

10. And it shall be, when the Lord thy God shall have brought thee into the land which he sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give thee great and goodly cities, which thou buildedst not;

10. Erit autem quum introduxerit te Jehova Deus tuus in terram de qua juravit patribus tuis, Abraham, Isaac et Jacob, se daturum tibi eam, et urbes magnas et pulchras quasnon ædificasti:

11. And houses full of all good *things*, which thou filledst not; and wells digged, which thou diggedst not; vineyards and olive-trees, which thou plantedst not; when thou shalt have eaten, and be full;

11. Et domus plenas omni bono, quas non replesti, et cisternas effossas, quas non effodisti: vineas et oliveta, quæ non plantasti: et comederis, et saturatus fueris:

[1] Added from the French.

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12. *Then* beware lest thou forget the Lord, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.

12. Cave tibi ne obliviscaris Jehovæ, qui eduxit te e terra Ægypti e domo servorum.

10. *And it shall be, when the Lord thy God.* Since wealth and prosperity for the most part blind men's minds, so that they do not sufficiently attend to modesty and moderation, but rather grow wanton in their lusts, and intoxicate themselves with pleasures, God prescribes against this error by anticipation. For not without cause does he admonish them to beware lest they forget God, when they shall have been liberally and luxuriously treated by Him, but because he knew this to be a common vice, for abundance to beget arrogance; as afterwards he will say in his song, "Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked: thou art waxen fat, &c., then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation." (Deut. xxxii. 15.) First of all, he shews how base and unworthy would be their ingratitude, if, when loaded with so many excellent benefits by God, they should cast away the recollection of Him; for, as His goodness was inestimable, in giving them cities built by the hands of others, and in transferring to them whatever others had prepared by their great labour and industry, so would their impiety be the more detestable in neglecting Him, when He daily set Himself before them in this abundant store of blessing. Let us learn, therefore, from this passage, that we are invited by God's liberality to honour Him, and that whenever He deals kindly by us, He places His glory before our eyes; but, on the other hand, we should remember, that what ought to be as it were vehicles, to lift up our minds on high, are, by our own fault, converted into obstacles and clogs, and that therefore we ought to be the more upon our guard. At the end of verse 12, he reproves their folly by another argument, if being thus suddenly enriched, they should give way to intemperance; as if he had said, that their absurdity would be insupportable, if, when uplifted by God's bounty, they should not remember their origin; for nothing should have served more to incline them to humility than that wretched state of servitude from whence they had been rescued. Therefore he contrasts with

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that ample dominion to which God had exalted them, "the house of bondmen,"[1] in order that the recollection of their former lot may restrain all frowardness.

DEUTERONOMY, CHAPTER IX.

1. Hear, O Israel: Thou *art* to pass over Jordan this day, to go in to possess nations greater and mightier than thyself, cities great, and fenced up to heaven;

2. A people great and tall, the children of the Anakims, whom thou knowest, and *of whom* thou hast heard *say*, Who can stand before the children of Anak?

3. Understand therefore this day, that the Lord thy God *is* he which goeth over before thee; *as* a consuming fire he shall destroy them, and he shall bring them down before thy face: so shalt thou drive them out, and destroy them quickly, as the Lord hath said unto thee.

4. Speak not thou in thine heart, after that the Lord thy God hath cast them out from before thee, saying, For my righteousness the Lord hath brought me in to possess this land; but for the wickedness of these nations the Lord doth drive them out from before thee.

5. Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart, dost thou go to possess their land; but for the wickedness of these nations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee, and that he may perform the word which the Lord sware unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

6. Understand therefore, that the Lord thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness; for thou *art* a stiff-necked people.

1. Audi Israel, Tu transis hodie Jordanem, ut ingrediaris ad possidendum gentes magnas et robustas præter te, urbes magnas et munitas usque ad cœlum;

2. Populum magnum et procerum, filios Enacim quos tu nosti, et de quibus tu audisti, Quis consistet coram filiis Enac?

3. Scito itaque hodie quod Jehova Deus tuus ipse est qui transit ante te, ignis consumens: ipse delebit eos ac humiliabit eos coram te, ut expellas eos perdasque eos cito, quemadmodum dixit Jehova tibi.

4. Ne dicas in corde tuo, quum expulerit Jehova Deus tuus illos a facie tua, dicendo, Propter justitiam meam introduxit me Jehova ut possideam terram hanc: quum propter iniquitatem gentium istarum Jehova expellat eas a facie tua.

5. Non propter justitiam tuam et rectitudinem cordis tui tu ingredieris ad possidendam terram eorum, sed propter impietatem gentium istarum Jehova Deus tuus expellit eas a facie tua, ut confirmet verbum quod juravit ipse Jehova patribus tuis, Abrahæ, Isaac, et Jacob.

6. Scito itaque quod non propter justitiam tuam Jehova Deus tuus dat tibi terram istam optimam, ut possideas eam: siquidem populus duræ cervicis es.

1. *Thou art to pass over Jordan this day.* The whole of this passage contains an eulogy on the gratuitous liberality

[1] Margin of *A. V.*

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of God, whereby He had bound the people to Himself unto the obedience of the Law. But this (as we have already seen) ought to have been a most pressing stimulus to incite the people, and altogether to ravish them to the worship and love of God, to whom they were under so great obligation. The design of Moses, then, was to shew that the Israelites, for no merit of their own, but by the signal bounty of God, would be heirs of the land of Canaan; and that this entirely flowed from the covenant and their gratuitous adoption; in order that, on their part, they should persevere in the faithful observation of the covenant, and so should be the more disposed to honour Him. For it would be too disgraceful that they, whom God had prevented by His grace, should not meet Him, as it were, by voluntarily submitting to His dominion. Moreover, lest they should arrogate anything to themselves, he commends the greatness of God's power, in that they could not be victorious over so many nations, unless by the miraculous aid of heaven. With this view, he states that these nations excelled not only in greatness and multitude, but also in military valour. He adds that their cities were great and impregnable; and, finally, that in them were the children of the giants, formidable from their enormous stature. For Anak (as is related in Joshua xv.[1]) was a celebrated giant, whose descendants were called Anakim. And, to take away all doubt about this, he cites themselves as witnesses, that they were so terrified by their appearance as to wish to turn back again. We now understand the object of all these details, viz., that God's glory may shine forth in the victories and success of the people. The words "whom thou knowest, and of whom thou hast heard," have reference to the spies;[2] for these giants had not yet become openly known to the people; but he transfers the case of a few to them all, because, by the account the spies had given, terror had invaded the whole camp, as though they had actually come into conflict with them. Since, then, they had been persuaded of their inferiority to their enemies, and

[1] Or, more fully in Numbers xiii. 33.

[2] "Qui avoyent este envoyez pour descouvrir la terre;" who had been sent to descry the land.—*Fr.*

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utterly disheartened by the report they received, Moses convicts them on their own evidence, lest, perchance, they might hereafter assume to themselves the praise which was due to God alone. But we are taught in these words, that such is the ingratitude of mankind, that they obscure, as much as they can, God's bounties, and never yield, except when driven to conviction.

3. *Understand therefore this day.* He concludes from what has preceded that the Israelites would be too perverse, unless they acknowledge that their enemies were overcome by the hand of God; and, still more to heighten the miracle, he uses a similitude, comparing God to a fire, which consumes so many nations in an unwonted and incredible manner. It is as if he had said, that it could not be effected by human or ordinary means that so many and such warlike peoples could thus quickly perish. Elsewhere God is called "a consuming fire" in a different sense, that we may fear his wrath and power; but here Moses only means that the destruction of the Canaanitish nations was His wonderful work.

4. *Speak not thou in thine heart.* He now more plainly warns the people not to exalt themselves in proud and foolish boasting. If they had not been naturally so depraved and malignant, it would have been sufficient to point out God's grace in a single word; but he could not induce them to gratitude except by correcting and destroying their pride. He therefore takes away this stumblingblock, in order that God's generosity might be conspicuous among them. "To speak in the heart" is equivalent to reflecting or conceiving an opinion. Wherefore Moses not only reproves the boasting of the lips, but that hidden arrogance, wherewith men are puffed up, when they take to themselves the praise which is due to God. Moreover, he not only prohibits them from ascribing it to their own valour, that they had routed their enemies, and gained possession of the land, but also from imagining that this was the just recompense of their merits. For God is not less defrauded of His glory when men oppose their righteousness to His liberality, than when they boast that whatever blessings they have are obtained by their own industry. To make this more clear, I will

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repeat it. Moses does not forbid the people from thinking that they had themselves acquired the land without God's aid; nay, he takes it for granted that they themselves will acknowledge that it was by God's help that they were victorious; but he is not contented with this limited gratitude unless they at the same time acknowledge that they had deserved nothing of the kind, and therefore that it was a mere and gratuitous act of His bounty. The reason given in the second clause does not appear sufficiently[1] conclusive, viz., that the nations were driven out on account of their own wickedness; for it might have been that what God took away from these wicked reprobates He transferred to those who were more worthy; but it appears to be an indirect admonition, that the Israelites should compare themselves with these nations; because it was evidently to be gathered by them from thence,[2] that they had not acquired this foreign land, from which the former inhabitants had been ejected, by their own righteousness. And this is still more clearly expressed in the two next verses.

5. *Not for thy righteousness.* First of all, he would have the punishment inflicted upon these nations awaken the Israelites to fear, and thus that they should attribute nothing to themselves; because it was God's design not to reward their merits, but to shew the severity of His judgment. Secondly, he confirms this by two arguments; viz., because God thus had performed what He promised Abraham; (which promise, as has been already seen, was founded on mere grace;) and, again, because the people itself was naturally perverse and rebellious. Hence, it sufficiently appears that there was no room for merits, since by them God's covenant would have been nullified, nor, if there were, could any such be found in so depraved and contumacious a nation. And besides, God had made His covenant with Abraham almost four centuries before they were born. Hence it follows that this benefit proceeded from some other source. But he still

[1] De prime face.—*Fr.*

[1] "Pour ce que, se cognoissans povres et miserables, ils devoyent aisement conclurre," &c.; because, knowing themselves to be poor and miserable, they might easily conclude, &c.—*Fr.*

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further represses their pride, by reproaching them with being "stiff-necked;" for it would have been too absurd to imagine that God, whom they had not ceased to provoke with their sins, was under obligation to them, as if they had duly discharged their duty. This metaphor is taken from oxen, which are useless until they are accustomed to bend their necks; it is then the same as saying that they were not only unsubmissive, but that in their obstinacy they shook off the yoke. By his impressing on them, for the third time, that the Israelites had not deserved the land by their righteousness, we learn that nothing is more difficult than for men to strip themselves of their blind arrogance, whereby they detract some portion of the praise from God's mercies. Now, if in regard to an earthly inheritance God so greatly exalts His mercy, what must we think of the heavenly inheritance?[1] He would have it attributed to Himself alone, that the children of Israel possess the land of Canaan; how much less, then, will He tolerate the obtrusion of men's merits in order to the acquisition of heaven? Nor is there anything in the pretence of the Papists that they attribute the first place to God's bounty; because He claims altogether for Himself what they would share with Him. But if any object that this was only said to His ancient people, I reply, that we are no better than they. Let each retire into himself,[2] and he will not excuse the hardness of his neck. But they who are regenerated by God's Spirit, know that they are not naturally formed unto obedience; and thus that it is only mercy which makes them to differ from the worst of men.

DEUTERONOMY, CHAPTER X.

21. He *is* thy praise, and he *is* thy God, that hath done for thee these great and terrible things which thine eyes have seen.

22. Thy fathers went down into Egypt with threescore and ten persons; and now the Lord thy God hath made thee as the stars of heaven for multitude.

21. Jehova est laus tua, et ipse est Deus qui fecit tecum magna et terribilia ista quæ viderunt oculi tui.

22. Cum septuaginta animabus descenderunt patres tui in Ægyptum: nunc autem posuit te Jehova Deus tuus sicut stellas cœli in multitudinem.

[1] L'heritage celeste, et permanent.—*Fr.*

[2] Pour se bien examiner.—*Fr.*

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DEUT. xi. 1. Therefore thou shalt love the Lord thy God, and keep his charge, and his statutes, and his judgments, and his commandments, alway.

2. And know ye this day: for *I speak* not with your children which have not known, and which have not seen the chastisement of the Lord your God, his greatness, his mighty hand, and his stretched-out arm,

3. And his miracles, and his acts, which he did in the midst of Egypt unto Pharaoh the king of Egypt, and unto all his land;

4. And what he did unto the army of Egypt, unto their horses, and to their chariots: how he made the water of the Red sea to overflow them, as they pursued after you, and *how* the Lord hath destroyed them unto this day;

5. And what he did unto you in the wilderness, until ye came into this place;

6. And what he did unto Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, the son of Reuben: how the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their households, and their tents, and all the substance that *was* in their possession, in the midst of all Israel.

7. But your eyes have seen all the great acts of the Lord which he did.

1. Dilige igitur Jehovam Deum tuum, et custodi custodiam ejus, et statuta ejus, et judicia ejus, et præcepta ejus omnibus diebus.

2. Et scitote hodie, non enim cum filiis vestris loquor, qui non noverunt, neque viderunt eruditionem Jehovæ Dei vestri, magnitudinem ejus, manum ejus validam, et brachium ejus extentum,

3. Et signa ejus, et opera ejus quæ fecit in medio Ægypti, ipsi Pharaoni regi Ægypti, et universæ terræ ejus.

4. Et quæ fecit exercitui Ægyptiorum, equis ejus et curribus ejus: qui inundare fecit aquas maris rubri super facies eorum, dum vos persequerentur: et perdidit eos Jehova usque in hanc diem.

5. Quæ præterea fecit vobis in deserto donec veniretis usque ad locum istum.

6. Et quæ fecit Datham et Abiram filiis Eliab filii Ruben, quando aperuit terra os suum, deglutivit eos, domosque eorum ac tabernacula eorum, atque universam substantiam quæ erat in pedibus eorum, in medio totius Israelis.

7. Quandoquidem oculi vestri viderunt omnia opera Jehovæ magna quæ fecit.

DEUT. X. 21. *He is thy praise.* That he may the more easily persuade his countrymen that nothing is better, or more desirable for them than to devote themselves to God's service, Moses reminds them that they have nothing to boast of out of Him; as if he had said, that they were happy in this one respect, that God had taken them under His charge; but that if this glory were to be taken away, they would be miserable and ruined. For God is called "the praise" of His people, as being their honour and their ornament. Consequently, if they desire to enjoy true and solid blessedness, they must take care to keep themselves under His guardianship; for, if they should be deprived of this,

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nothing would remain to them but ignominy and shame. To the same effect, he adds, that He is their God; because nothing can be more perverse and absurd than not to receive the Creator of the world Himself, when He freely offers Himself as our God. In proof of this, he subjoins, that He has exerted His power in many miracles for His people's safety; and, in order that they might be rendered the more inexcusable, he cites their own eyes as witnesses of so many mighty acts which had been wrought in their favour. Thence he goes a step higher, (reminding them,[1]) that their race had been wondrously increased in a short time; whence it was plain, that they had been thus incredibly multiplied by preternatural and divine influence. For assuredly the signal blessing of God was clearly manifested, in the procreation of seven hundred thousand men in less than two hundred and fifty years.[2] Those who then lived had not seen them with their own eyes; but Moses retraces God's grace to the fountain-head, that they may more fully acknowledge, that whatever good they had experienced depended on that adoption, which had made them God's people.

DEUT. xi. 1. *Therefore thou shalt love the Lord thy God.* The whole address has this scope, that the people should testify their gratitude by their obedience, and thus being allured by God's bounties, should reverently embrace His Law. On this account also, he requires them to love God, before he exhorts them to obey the Law itself. For, although he might have imperiously and menacingly commanded them, he preferred to lead them gently to obedience, by setting before them the sweetness of His grace. In sum, he exhorts them that, being invited by God's love, they should love him in return. Meanwhile, it is well to observe that free affection is the foundation and beginning of duly obeying the Law, for what is drawn forth by constraint, or servile fear, cannot please God. He designates the precepts of the Law by various names, in order that they may zealously and attentively apply themselves to listen to God, who has omitted nothing calculated to regulate their life;

[1] Added from the French.
[2] D'un si petit nombre des gens.—*Fr.*

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for, by this variety of words, he signifies that God had familiarly and perfectly taught whatever was required. As to the three latter words, "his statutes, and judgments, and commandments," what I have observed in Genesis and in the Psalms may be referred to. The word משמרת,[1] *meshamroth*, or guards, (*custodiæ*,) which here stands first, is spoken in commendation of the Law on this ground, that it fences in our life, as it were, with rails, lest it should be exposed to errors on the right hand and on the left. At the end of the verse he exhorts them to perseverance, because it was not allowable for the recollection of their deliverance ever to cease.

2. *And know ye this day.* He again confirms the preceding sentence; because they had been more than sufficiently taught by the illustrious acts of God, how great was His power and how remarkable His mercy toward themselves. Two meanings may be given to the words; for some connect them thus, "Know ye this day the chastisement of the Lord," and include in a parenthesis the clause, "for I speak not with your children, which have not known, and have not seen;" but others read the word of exhortation "know ye" separately, and[2] without any connection. The latter view pleases me best; although it little affects the substance of the matter which exposition we follow. For Moses admonishes them, that, if they only pay attention to the works of God, His glory, which may instruct them to fear Him, may be clearly beheld in them. In order, however, to urge them more vehemently, he adds, that he does not speak to posterity, to which the fame of these miracles would reach, but that he addresses eye-witnesses, who need no proof of them, having been assured of them by certain experience. He celebrates in many expressions of eulogy these miracles, whereby God had testified to them His power and goodness, lest they should lightly pass by what was worthy of their most earnest attention, and constant meditation. I forbear now to speak of other points, which I have

[1] משמרת. *A. V., charge.* The LXX. keeps closest to the Hebrew idiom, φυλάξη τὰ φυλάγματα ἄυτου.—*W.*

[2] Tellement que tout le reste va son train.—*Fr.*

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elsewhere commented on. The word מוסר,[1] *musar*, which stands first, is general, and extends to all the specific terms that follow; some, therefore, improperly render it "chastisement." Where it is said at the end of verse 4, that the Egyptians were "destroyed unto that day," we must understand that the effects of the slaughter, wherewith God destroyed them, were felt as if still present.

5. *And what he did unto you.* These things will be spoken of in their proper place in the regular course of the history, from which my method of teaching has compelled me to wander a little. For Moses, to heighten the authority of the Law, sets before them compendiously the circumstances which had occurred in the desert, partly in order that God's judgments might alarm them by their severity, and partly that His mercies might draw their minds towards Him by their graciousness. Finally, he concludes by saying that he does not speak of unknown things, but that he merely recalled to their recollection the works of God whereof they had been themselves spectators.

DEUTERONOMY, CHAPTER VIII.

1. All the commandments which I command thee this day shall ye observe to do, that ye may live, and multiply, and go in and possess the land which the Lord sware unto your fathers.

2. And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, *and* to prove thee, to know what *was* in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.

3. And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every *word* that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live.

1. Omne præceptum quod ego præcipio tibi hodie, custodietis ut faciatis, ut vivatis, et multiplicemini, et ingrediamini ut possideatis terram de qua juravit Jehova patribus vestris.

2. Meminerisque totius viæ per quam deduxit te Jehova Deus tuus jam quadraginta annis in deserto, ut affligeret te ac tentaret te, ut sciret quid haberes in corde tuo, utrum observaturus esses præcepta ejus, annon.

3. Et afflixit te, ac esurire te fecit, postea pavit te Man, quod non noveras, neque noverant patres tui: ut scire faceret te quod non in pane solo vivet homo, sed omni eo quod egreditur ex ore Jehovæ vivet homo.

[1] מוסר. *S. M.* has rendered this word *castigatio*. *V.*, disciplina. The root is יסר; and both the root and noun meaning to correct and correction, will sometimes mean to chastise, &c.—*W.*

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4. Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years.

5. Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, *so* the Lord thy God chasteneth thee.

6. Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to fear him.

DEUT. xi. 8. Therefore shall ye keep all the commandments which I command you this day, that ye may be strong, and go in and possess the land whither ye go to possess it;

9. And that ye may prolong *your* days in the land which the Lord sware unto your fathers to give unto them, and to their seed, a land that oweth with milk and honey.

4. Vestimentum tuum ne quaquam veteravit super te, neque pes tuus intumuit jam quadraginta annis.

5. Sciasque in corde tuo quod quemadmodum erudit homo filium suum, sic Jehova Deus tuus erudit te.

6. Et custodies præcepta Jehovæ Dei tui, ut ambules per vias ejus, et timeas eum.

8. Custodite ergo omne præceptum quod ego præcipio vobis hodie, ut roboremini, et ingrediamini, possideatisque terram ad quam vos transitis ut possideatis eam.

9. Atque ut prolongetis dies super terram quam juravit Jehova patribus vestris se daturum illis et semini eorum, terram fluentem lacte et melle.

DEUT. viii. 1. *All the commandments.* Although the first verse might have been included among the promises, whereby, as we shall hereafter see, the Law was ratified by Moses, because he here exhorts and incites the Israelites to obedience by proposing to them the hope of reward; still it appeared to me that I might conveniently insert it here, since the design of Moses was simply this, to attract them by the sweetness of the promised inheritance to receive the doctrines of the Law. This sentence, then, may be justly counted among those whereby their minds were prepared to submit themselves to God with the gentleness and docility that became them; as though he had said, because the land of Canaan is now not far from you, its very nearness ought to encourage you to take upon you God's yoke more cheerfully; for the same God, who this day declares to you His law, invites you to the enjoyment of that land, which He promised with an oath to your fathers. And certainly it is evident from this latter clause of the verse, that Moses did not simply promise them a reward if they should keep the law; but rather set before them the previous favour, wherewith God had gratuitously prevented them, in order that they might, on their part, shew themselves grateful for it

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Moses calls the commandments *his*, not (as we have already seen) because he had invented them himself, but because he faithfully handed them down from the dictation of God's own mouth. And this we may also more fully gather from the following verse, wherein he recounts the mercies of the time past, and at the same time calls to their recollection by how many proofs God had instructed them, to form and accustom them to obedience. In the first place, he bids them remember generally the dealings of God, which they had seen for forty years, and then descends to particulars, viz., that God had proved them by afflictions, "to know what was in their heart;" for thus may the expressions be paraphrased, "to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart;" in which words he admonishes them, that they were painfully tried by many troubles and difficulties not without very good reason, viz., because they had need of such trial. Yet, at the same time, he indirectly reproves their obstinacy, which was then detected; since otherwise, if all things had gone prosperously with them, it would have been easy for them to pretend great fear of God, though, as was actually discovered, it did not really exist.

3. *And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger.* Inasmuch as they were sometimes made to suffer hunger in the wilderness, he proves the advantage of this discipline, because they thus learnt that the human race does not live by bread and wine alone, but by the secret power of God. For though all confess that it is through God's goodness that the earth is fruitful, still their senses are so tied to the meat and drink, that they rise no higher, and do not acknowledge God as their Father and nourisher, but rather bind Him down to the outward means to which they are attached, as if His hand, of itself, and without instruments, could not effect or supply anything. Their perception, therefore, that the fruits of the earth are produced by God, is but a cold notion, which speedily vanishes, and does not cling to their memory. The power of God, as well as His goodness, is indeed abundantly manifested in the use of His creatures, which we naturally enjoy; but the depravity of the human mind causes that the testimonies of it act like a veil to ob-

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scure that bright light. Besides, the majority of mankind think of God as if banished afar off, and dwelling in inactivity as if He had resigned His office in heaven and earth; and hence it arises, that trusting in their present abundance, they implore not His favour, nay, that they pass it by as needless; and, when deprived of their accustomed supplies, they altogether despair, as if God's hand alone were insufficient for their succour. Since, then, men do not sufficiently profit by the guidance and instruction of nature, but rather are blinded in their view of God's works, it was desirable that in this miracle (of the manna) a standing and manifest proof should be given, that men do not only live upon God's bounty, when they eat bread and drink wine, but even when all supplies fail them. Although there be some harshness in the words, yet the sense is clear, that men's life consists not in their food, but that God's inspiration suffices for their nourishment. And we must remember, that the eternal life of the soul is not here referred to, but that we are simply and solely taught that although bread and wine fail, our bodies may be sustained and invigorated by God's will alone. Let it then be regarded as settled, that this is improperly, however acutely, referred to the spiritual life, and a relation imagined in its doctrine to faith; as if the grace, which is offered in the promises, and received by faith, gave life to our souls; since it is simply stated, that the animating principle (*vigor*), which is diffused by the spirit of God for sustenance, proceeds out of His mouth. In Psalm civ. 30, there is an exact repetition of what was before said here by Moses, "Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth." The word translated "not only," seems to have been expressly added, lest, if Moses had altogether excluded the bread which is destined for our food, he should not do justice to God. Thus, then, does he guard his words, as much as to say, that although bread sustains man's life, still this support would be too weak, unless the hidden power of God occupied the first place; and that this intrinsic virtue, as it is called, which He of Himself inspires, would suffice, even although all other aids should fail. And this doctrine, first of all, arouses us to gratitude, referring to

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God Himself whatever by His creatures He supplies to us for the nourishment and preservation of our lives, whilst it teaches us that although all the instruments of this world should fail, still we may hope for life from Himself alone. There is no ordinary wisdom in recollecting both these points. Christ admirably applied this passage to its true and genuine practical use; for when the devil would persuade him to command the stones to be made bread for the satisfaction of His hunger, He answered, "Man shall not live by bread alone," &c., (Matt. iv. 4,) as if He had said, There is in God's hands another remedy, for even although He supply not food, He is still able to keep men in life by His will alone. But I touch upon this the more briefly, because I have more fully treated it in my Commentaries on "the Harmony of the Gospels."[1] With the same object he adds, that their raiment was not worn out in so long a time, and that their shoes remained whole; viz., that they might be fully convinced, that whatever concerns the preservation of human life and man's daily wants is so entirely in God's hands, that not only its enjoyment, but even its continuance and being, depend upon His blessing.

5. *Thou shalt also consider in thine heart.* He concludes that in the constant tenor of God's acts, from the time the Israelites were brought out of Egypt, His paternal care for their instruction might be recognised. For the word יסר,[2] *yasar*, is taken by some in too restricted a sense for "to chastise," whereas it comprehends the whole process of a proper education; as if he had said, that unless they were hereafter submissive, and disposed to be dutiful, they would be something more than intractable, since they had been duly taught and kept under the best discipline, and that God had omitted nothing which could be required from the father of a family. Hence it follows, that long ago, and by much instruction, they were accustomed to embrace the teaching of the Law, just as it becomes children to be obedient to their father's voice. And this he explains more clearly in the next verse; again concluding, that therefore

[1] See Calvin Society Translation, *in loco*.
[2] See note on Deut. xi. 2, *ante*, p. 383.

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they were to observe the Law, and to walk in the commandments of God. Whereon also we may shortly observe, that the fear of God, as I have already stated elsewhere, is the foundation of due obedience to the Law. The passage which I have interwoven from Deut. xi. may also be counted among the promises, for God allures in it His people to obedience by the hope of His blessing; and since the possession of the land, which was then in sight, is set before them, the words appeared to me to fit in not badly here; because God had no other intention in this eulogium of it, but to prepare the minds of the people for keeping the Law.

DEUTERONOMY, CHAPTER XXIX.

2. And Moses called unto all Israel, and said unto them, Ye have seen all that the Lord did before your eyes in the land of Egypt unto Pharaoh, and unto all his servants, and unto all his land;

3. The great temptations which thine eyes have seen, the signs, and those great miracles;

4. Yet the Lord hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day.

5. And I have led you forty years in the wilderness: your clothes are not waxen old upon you, and thy shoe is not waxen old upon thy foot.

6. Ye have not eaten bread, neither have ye drunk wine or strong drink; that ye might know that I *am* the Lord your God.

7. And when ye came unto this place, Sihon the king of Heshbon, and Og the king of Bashan, came out against us unto battle, and we smote them:

8. And we took their land, and gave it for an inheritance unto the Reubenites, and to the Gadites, and to the half-tribe of Manasseh.

9. Keep therefore the words of this covenant, and do them, that ye may prosper in all that ye do.

2. Vocavitque Moses universum Israelem, et dixit eis, Vos ipsi vidistis omnia quæ fecit Jehova in oculis vestris in terra Ægypti Pharaoni et omnibus servis ejus, et universæ terræ ejus.

3. Probationes magnas quas viderunt oculi tui, signa et portenta illa magna.

4. Neque dedit vobis Jehova cor ad intelligendum, et oculos ad videndum, et aures ad audiendum usque in hunc diem.

5. Et deduxi vos quadraginta annis per desertum: non inveteraverunt vestimenta vestra super vos, nec calceamentum vestrum veteravit super pedem vestrum.

6. Panem non comedistis, neque vinum et siceram bibistis: ut intelligatis quod ego Jehova Deus vester.

7. Venistis tandem ad locum istum: egressusque est Sehon rex Esbon, et Og rex Basan in occursum nostrum ad prælium, et percussimus eos;

8. Et abstulimus terram ipsorum, tradidimusque in hæreditatem Rubenitis, et Gaditis, et dimidiæ tribui Manasse.

9. Custodiatis ergo verba pacti hujus et facite ea, ut (*vel*, intelligatis) prospere agatis in omnibus quæ facturi estis.

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2. *And Moses called unto all Israel.* This passage also may be fitly referred to the preface of the Law, since its tendency is to recommend it, and to instruct and prepare the people's minds to be teachable. It takes its commencement from the divine blessings, which they had experienced as well in their exodus as in their forty years' wanderings; for it would have been the height of baseness and ingratitude not to devote themselves to a Deliverer who had dealt so graciously with them. And surely it was an inestimable sign of His paternal love towards them, that He should have arrayed Himself against so very powerful a king for His servants' sake. Finally, lest there should be any question as to their deliverance, he enlarges upon the power which God displayed therein, in magnificent terms of praise according with its dignity.

4. *Yet the Lord hath not given.* By reproaching them with their past stupidity, he stirs up their desire for a better understanding, as if he had said, that they had been too long indifferent to so many miracles, and therefore they should no longer delay to rouse themselves, &c., to give greater heed to God; not because they had been so senseless that His acts had altogether escaped their notice, but because all acknowledgment of them had immediately come to an end. For, just as the drunken man, or one suffering from lethargy, when he hears a cry, raises his head for a moment, and opens his eyes, and then relapses into a state of torpor, so the people had never seriously applied their minds to consider God's works; and when they had been aroused by some miracle, had immediately sunk back into forgetfulness, wherefore there is good cause why Moses should seek to awaken them from their dulness and stupidity by various methods. But he does not merely condemn their senselessness, and blindness, and deafness, but declares that they were thus senseless, and blind, and deaf, because they were not inspired with grace from above to profit duly by so many lessons. Thence we learn that a clear and powerful understanding is a special gift of the Spirit, since men are ever blind even in the brightest light, until they have been enlightened by God. What Moses relates of the

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Israelites, is unquestionably common to us all. He declares, then, that they were not induced by the conspicuous glory of God to fear and worship Him, because He had not given them either mind, or eyes, or ears. It is true that at man's creation He had naturally bestowed upon him a mind, and ears, and eyes; but Moses means, that whatever innate light we have, is either hidden or lost, so that, as far as regards the highest point of wisdom, all our senses lie useless. True that in nature's corruption, *the light* still *shineth in darkness*, but it is light which is soon obscured; therefore, the entire understanding and faculty of reason, in which men glory and pique themselves, is nought but smoke and darkness. Well then may David ask that his eyes may be opened to behold the secrets of the Law.[1] (Ps. cxix. 18.) Still this defect by no means frees us from blame; because (as we are told) none have wisdom, but those to whom it is given by the Father of lights; for we are ignorant[2] through our own fault. Besides, every one is sufficiently, and more than sufficiently convicted by his own conscience, that his ignorance is closely connected with pride and indolence, and is therefore voluntary. The word *heart* is not here used for the seat of the affections, but for the mind itself, which is the intellectual faculty of the soul.

5. *And I have led you.* He descends to the blessings with which He had continually visited His people during the course of forty years. Yet he does not recount them all, but contents himself with a few of the most remarkable instances, viz., that their clothes had not been worn out by age, and that they had been fed from heaven, when no sustenance was to be obtained from the fruits of the earth. He reminds them that God's glory had been manifested by these testimonies, in order that they might submit themselves to His rule.

7. *And when ye came unto this place.* This, a third instance (of God's goodness), because He had smitten the first

[1] The references here are to Ps. xix. 13, and xviii. 24, (in the *Fr.* 14.) There may be *allusion* to xix. 12, and xviii. 28. See *Calvin's* comments on these passages.

[2] "Desipimus."—*Lat.* "Ainsi hebetez, et desprouvez de sens."—*Fr.*

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enemies, who encountered them to impede their passage, and thus had already begun to bring them into a place of rest. For inasmuch as the two tribes and a half had here chosen their home, they might behold as in a mirror that the possession of the promised land awaited them. Hence, then, Moses concludes that they were under obligation to keep the law, and exhorts them to shew their gratitude by faithful and sincere obedience. The object, therefore, of the recital is, to procure reverent attention to his doctrine; since the word שכל,[1] *shakal*, in *Hiphil*, means to act successfully as well as prudently. I have set down both readings, since they are alike suitable to the sense. For we have seen in chap. iv., that this was the people's only wisdom to obey God's statutes; nor was their prosperity to be expected from any other source except God's blessing, which is everywhere promised to the Israelites, if they keep the law.

DEUTERONOMY, CHAPTER VIII.

7. For the Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land; a land of brooks of water, of fountains, and depths that spring out of valleys and hills;

8. A land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig-trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil-olive and honey;

9. A land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack any *thing* in it; a land whose stones *are* iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass.

10. When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the Lord thy God for the good land which he hath given thee.

7. Quia Jehova Deus tuus introducit te in terram bonam, terram ubi torrentes, aquarum fontes, et abyssi erumpentes per valles et colles.

8. Terram frumenti, et hordei, vitis et ficus, et malogranati: terram oleæ oliviferæ, et mellis.

9. Terram in qua non comedes panem in penuria, nec ulla re indigebis: terram cujus lapides sunt ferrum, et e cujus montibus effodies æs.

10. Comedes igitur, et satiaberis: et tunc benedices Jehovæ Deo tuo in terra illa quam dedit tibi.

A REPETITION OF THE SAME DECLARATION.

DEUT. xi. 10. For the land, whither thou goest in to possess it, *is* not as the land of Egypt, from

10. Terra enim quam tu ingrederis ut possideas eam, non est sicut terra Ægypti, ex qua egressi estis,

[1] תשכילו; *A. V.*, that ye may prosper. *S. M.*, ut prudenter agatis; but he adds, the Hebrews explain this word by העליחו, "that ye may prosper." The Hiphil of שכל, says Simon's Lexicon, is *to act prudently*, and by a metonymy of the antecedent for the consequent, *to proceed prosperously.—W.*

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whence ye came out, where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst *it* with thy foot, as a garden of herbs:

11. But the land, whither ye go to possess it, *is* a land of hills and valleys, *and* drinketh water of the rain of heaven:

12. A land which the Lord thy God careth for: the eyes of the Lord thy God *are* always upon it, from the beginning of the year, even unto the end of the year.

DEUT. vi. 1. Now these *are* the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the Lord your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do *them* in the land whither ye go to possess it;

2. That thou mightest fear the Lord thy God, to keep all his statutes, and his commandments, which I command thee; thou, and thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life, and that thy days may be prolonged.

3. Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do *it;* that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as the Lord God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey.

DEUT. vi. 17. Ye shall diligently keep the commandments of the Lord your God, and his testimonies, and his statutes, which he hath commanded thee.

18. And thou shalt do *that which is* right and good in the sight of the Lord; that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest go in and possess the good land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers,

19. To cast out all thine enemies from before thee, as the Lord hath spoken.

in qua seminabas semen tuum, et irrigabas pede tuo, ut hortum oleris.

11. At terra ad quam vos transibitis ut possideatis eam, terra montium et vallium est: de pluvia cœli bibes aquam.

13. Est terra quam Jehova Deus tuus requirit: semper sunt oculi Jehovæ Dei tui in ea, a principio anni usque ad extremum anni.

1. Istud autem est præceptum, statuta et judicia quæ præcepit Jehova Deus vester ut docerem vos, ut faciatis illa in terra ad quam vos transitis ut possideatis:

2. Ut timeas Jehovam Deum tuum, custodiendo omnia statuta ejus et præcepta ejus, quæ ego præcipio tibi, tu et filius tuus, et filius filii tui, omnibus diebus vitæ tuæ: et ut prolongentur dies tui.

3. Audias ergo o Israel, et custodias ut facias, ut bene tibi sit, utque multiplicemini valde, quemadmodum dixit Jehova Deus patrum tuorum tibi in terra, quæ fluit lacte et melle.

17. Custodiendo custodietis præcepta Jehovæ, Dei vestri, et testimonia ejus, et statuta ejus quæ præcepit tibi.

18. Faciesque quod rectum et bonum est in oculis Jehovæ, ut bene sit tibi, et ingrediaris possideasque terram bonam, quam juravit Jehova patribus tuis.

19. Ut expellat omnes hostes tuos a facie tua, sicut loquutus est Jehova.

DEUT. VIII. 7. *For the Lord thy God.* We may shortly sum up the words and the matter. He almost sets before their eyes a habitation full of wealth and various advantages, in order that they there may worship God more cheerfully, and study to repay by their gratitude so signal a benefit.

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In chap. viii. he commends the goodness of the land, because it is watered by the streams which flow through its valleys and mountains, and because it produces all kinds of fruits to supply them with nourishment ; and not only so, but because it contains also mines of iron and brass. In chap. xi. he expresses the same thing more plainly and in greater detail, by the addition of a comparison with the land of Egypt; the fruitfulness of which, although it is marvellous from the yearly inundation of the Nile, and is renowned as an extraordinary miracle, yet requires much labour and cultivation, since it is irrigated by means of drains by the hand and industry of men. But the land of Canaan depends on God's blessing, and waits for the rain from heaven. Moreover Moses extols in glowing words the peculiar privilege of the land, saying, that it is ever looked upon by God, in order that, on their part, the Israelites might attentively, and constantly also, look to Him. For this is the force of the words, "always, from the beginning of the year, even unto the end of the year;" as if he had said, that they would be ungrateful to God, unless they constantly and zealously directed their regards to Him, since He never ceased daily to look on them. It is true, indeed, that there is no corner of the earth which does not experience God's blessing, witness the fact that the Nile fertilizes the whole of Egypt; but, because that only happens once a year, and since its waters are conducted hither and thither by drains artificially made by man, Moses, therefore, not improperly makes it the ground of his exhortation that they should constantly give themselves to meditation on the Law ; for not only at a particular season of the year, but almost at every moment, their necessity would compel them to ask for God's aid, when they saw that the land was ever requiring from Him the remedy of its dryness. The question however arises, how Moses could declare in such magnificent terms the richness of the land of Canaan, when now-a-days it is scarcely counted among those that are fertile ; and thus[1] the ungodly wantonly de-

[1] "Des esprits phrenetiques, and profanes."—*Fr.* This ancient scoff, repeated by Voltaire and other modern infidels, is well met by Dr. Keith, "Evidences of Prophecy, (Art. Judæa,)" by quotations not only from Ta-

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ride him, since all whom business or any other cause have taken there contradict his encomiums. Yet I do not doubt that it was always distinguished by the abundance of its various fruits, as we shall presently see in its proper place, where its fertility was proved by the bunch of grapes; but, at the same time, it is to be observed that its abundance was increased in a new and unwonted manner by the arrival of the people, that God might shew that He had blessed that country above all others for the liberal supply of His children. As long, therefore, as that land was granted as the inheritance of the race of Abraham, it was remarkable for that fertility which God had promised by Moses. But now, so far from wondering that it is to a great extent desert and barren, we ought rather to be surprised that some small vestiges of its ancient fruitfulness exist; since what God Himself had so often threatened against it must needs be fulfilled. The barrenness, therefore, of the land as it now appears, instead of derogating from the testimony of Moses, rather gives ocular demonstration of the judgment of God, which, as we shall see elsewhere, was denounced against it. In sum, as God for His people's sake still further enriched a land already fruitful, so, for the punishment of the sins of this same people, He sowed it with salt, that it might afford a sad spectacle of His curse.

10. *When thou hast eaten and art full.* In these words he admonishes them that they would be too senseless, unless God's great bounty should attract them to obedience, since nothing is more unreasonable, than, when we have eaten and are full, not to acknowledge from whence our food has come. Fitly, then, does Moses require gratitude from the people, when they shall enjoy both the land promised to them and an abundance of all good things.

DEUT. VI. 1. *Now these are the commandments.* In these three verses he repeats what we have already seen in many previous passages; since God deals so liberally with the Israelites, they would be too perverse, unless such great kindness should allure them to love the law. We must remember

citus, Ammianus Marcellinus, Florus, and Pliny the Elder, but from Volney and Gibbon themselves, as well as more friendly witnesses.

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too what I have already touched on, that, although I have postponed to another place the promises, whereby Moses urged the people to endeavour to keep the Law, still I have designedly put before my exposition of the Law those passages, in which, by setting the promised land as it were before the people's eyes, he prepares their minds for submission, and renders the rule of so bountiful a Father pleasant and delightful. Since, then, they were appointed to inherit the land, Moses, when he invites them to its enjoyment, commands them gladly to embrace the doctrine, for the sake of which they were adopted; and to devote themselves, on their side, to obedience to God, by whose gratuitous goodness they had been prevented. As in chapters viii. and xi. he praised the richness of the land, so does he now confirm the same statement; or rather afterwards more fully explains what he slightly touches upon here. They all agree in this, that the happy state of life which was before their eyes ought to awaken the people's gratitude, lest such notable beneficence should be expended on them in vain. Moses therefore declares, that he had presented to them laws and statutes, by which they might be instructed in the fear of God; at the same time, he reminds them how base in them it would be not to be ravished to the love of God and of His law by the delightfulness and abundance of the land. I pass over what I have already explained, viz., that he taught nothing of himself, but was the faithful interpreter of God; and also that he commands the doctrine to be handed down to their posterity, so that it may never be lost. Whence it appears how difficult it is for men to be duly prepared for keeping the law, since God does not in vain so often stimulate their indolence; for there is a silent reproof conveyed either of their indolence or instability, when God does not cease to insist on what it would have been sufficient to have pointed out in a single word. We must also remark the definition of righteousness, that they should *do what is right in the sight of the Lord;* in opposition to the reason and judgment of the flesh.

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DEUTERONOMY, CHAPTER VIII.

11. Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day:

12. Lest *when* thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt *therein;*

13. And *when* thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied;

14. Then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage;

15. Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, *wherein were* fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where *there was* no water; who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint;

16. Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not; that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end;

17. And thou say in thine heart, My power, and the might of *mine* hand, hath gotten me this wealth.

18. But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for *it is* he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as *it is* this day.

11. Cave tibi ne obliviscaris Jehovæ Dei tui, ut non observes præcepta ejus, et judicia ejus, et statuta ejus, quæ ego præcipio tibi hodie.

12. Ne forte comedas et satureris, et domos egregias ædifices, atque habites in illis.

13. Et boves tui ovesque tuæ multiplicentur, argentum quoque et aurum multiplicentur tibi: omne *inquam* quod est tibi multiplicetur;

14. Tum elevetur cor tuum, et obliviscaris Jehovæ Dei tui, qui eduxit te e terra Ægypti, e domo servorum:

15. Qui deduxit te per desertum magnum et terribile serpentis adurentis, et scorpionis, et sitis, in quo nulla erat aqua: qui eduxit tibi aquam e petra silicis:

16. Qui pavit te Man in deserto, quod non noverant patres tui: ut affligeret te, et probaret te, ut benefaceret tibi in novissimo tuo.

17. Ut dicas in corde tuo, Potentia mea et robur manus meæ paravit mihi has opes.

18. Sed memineris Jehovæ Dei tui, quia ipse dat tibi facultatem ad parandas opes, ut confirmet pactum suum quod juravit patribus tuis, sicut in hoc die.

11. *Beware that thou forget not.*[1] We may easily estimate the necessity of this admonition from the common corruption of human nature, which is even yet only too general and too influential; for scarcely shall we find one person in a hundred in whom satiety does not generate headiness. Moses will hereafter speak in his Song of the rebelliousness of this people,[2] "The beloved, (*Jeshurun,*) waxen fat, and

[1] Take heed to thyself.—*Lat.*

[2] "LXX. autem pro eo (Jeshurun) substituerunt ὁ ἠγαπημένος, et *V.* imitatur per suum *Dilectus.* Unde autem sit illa versio, vix explicari video; fatente etiam Steucho, se nescire a quo verbo id nomen duci possit

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grown thick, kicked." (Deut. xxxii. 15.) It was needful, then, that a restraint should be put on such refractory beings, nay, that they should have their wantonness still more tightly repressed in their prosperity. But we may, and it is well to, extend this doctrine to ourselves also, since prosperity intoxicates almost all of us, so that we intemperately grow wanton against God, and forget ourselves and Him. Therefore Moses not only commands the Israelites not to be ungrateful to God, but warns them to *guard* themselves (for he uses this word for to *beware*) from that impious ingratitude. He immediately after uses this same word for the keeping of the Law. But this is the sum, that they needed the utmost care and attention to beware lest forgetfulness of God should steal over them in happy circumstances, and thus they should shake off His fear, and cast away His yoke, and indulge themselves in the lusts of their flesh. For he shews that contempt of the Law would be a token of ingratitude; because it could not be but that they would submit themselves to God, and keep His Law, if they only reflected that it was to nothing but His blessing that they owed their prosperity. We have already observed elsewhere that his designation of the Law by various terms amounts to a commendation of its perfect doctrine; as much as to say, that no part of right conduct is omitted in it. He also asserts here (as often elsewhere) the faithfulness of his ministry, lest they should shufflingly contend that, whilst they refuse the commands of a mortal man, they are not therefore rebellious against God. He says, then, that their piety will not be acceptable to God, unless they keep the Law propounded by Him.

12. *Lest when thou hast eaten and art full.* He more fully explains what we have already observed, viz., that it might happen, in the gradual course of time, that they should fail in their fear of God and honour for His Law, and therefore should take the greater care lest continual peace and joy should bring this callousness upon them. We should diligently remark the cause of departure which he points out,

si Dilectum significat," &c.—*Marckius on Deut.* xxxii. *C.'s* own translation of the word is *Rectus*.

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viz., the pride whereby riches and abundance ordinarily puff up men's minds. The examples of moderation in prosperity are rare; rather, as soon as men perceive themselves to be in a flourishing estate, they begin to swell with arrogance, and so admire their exaltation that they despise even God Himself. On this ground Paul charges "the rich in this world that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches." (1 Tim. vi. 17.) We ought, indeed, the more kindly we are dealt with by God, to submit ourselves the more meekly to His rule; but, as I have said, the depravity of our nature hurries us quite the other way, so that we grow insolent under God's indulgence, which should bend us to submission. And if this does not happen immediately, yet whenever prosperity flows on uninterruptedly, its delights gradually corrupt even the best of us, so that they at last degenerate from themselves. If, then, we desire to steer a straight course, we ought to strive after the healing of this most deadly disease of pride. Again, since by the wiles of Satan continued prosperity softens and ensnares us, let us learn to beware not only for a day, but to keep watch through the whole course of our lives. Moses wisely anticipates their pride by recalling to the Israelites' recollection what was their original condition. For whence does it arise that those who seem to themselves and others to be happy in the world are puffed up with self-confidence and pride, except because they reflect not on their origin, but despise all but themselves, just as if they had come down from the clouds? For there are few like Codrus, who, after gaining a kingdom, always ingenuously confessed that his father had been a potter. God here presents a remedy to this vice, (which reigns too extensively,) by representing to the Israelites their former state, and commanding them to reflect that they were rescued from it by His especial blessing. Nothing but the recollection of their deliverance could tame their arrogance; for what could be more unreasonable than that *they* should be insolent who were formerly the slaves of a most haughty nation, and who had not acquired their liberty by their own efforts, but contrary to their hope and deserts had obtained it by God's mere favour, who then had wandered in exile through the

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wilderness, and at length, under God's guidance, had entered the land promised them? In a word, God deals with them just as if one should reproach a man (who, having become suddenly rich, bore himself intemperately) with his former beggary and want. Moreover, since they were too slow of heart to receive this admonition promptly and cheerfully, Moses enlarges on the Divine benefits which they had experienced in the wilderness. For this was incredible, that this mixed multitude of men, and women, and children, and slaves should have lived so many years, not only amongst wild beasts, but amongst scorpions and vipers, and all that is most venomous in the serpent tribe. God's goodness shone forth, too, still more brightly in that sudden miracle whereby He supplied water to them in their thirst from what was before an arid rock. [1]But since he reminds them in the next verse how they had manna for their bread or food, I will join these two things together.

16. *Who fed thee in the wilderness.* He had said that water was brought forth from the rock of flint when the people were suffering from thirst; now, he adds that they had manna instead of bread; as if he had said that when meat and drink failed them they must have perished of want unless God had preternaturally given them both, causing the hard rock to flow down in water, and sending bread from heaven. Moreover he repeats what he had said before, that the people were afflicted with this need as a trial of their faith and patience; yet in this trial both their incredulity and intemperance were discovered, whilst God's goodness and power were eventually more clearly displayed, since He pardoned their ingratitude, and, notwithstanding it, aided their necessity. For if they had not suffered from hunger, God's bounty in supplying them with their daily food would have been neglectfully received. This is the meaning of the conclusion, "to do thee good at thy latter end." From which words let us also learn that we are often deprived of our necessary supplies, in order that our senses may awaken to acknowledge God's aid which appears in our extremity. For whilst abundance covers our eyes with a

[1] The following sentence is omitted in the French.

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veil, or dims their sight, so, on the other hand, deprivation and want purge and remove this dimness that we may more clearly perceive the benefits afforded us by God.

17. *And thou say in thy heart.* He describes that kind of pride of which we have lately spoken, viz., when men attribute to their own industry, or labour, or foresight, what they ought to refer to the blessing of God. It has indeed been said, that our hearts are uplifted in other ways also; but this is the principal ground of pride, to assume and assign to ourselves what belongs to God. For nothing so greatly confines us within the boundaries of humility and modesty as the acknowledgment of God's grace; for it is madness and temerity to raise our crests against Him on whom we depend, and to whom we owe ourselves and all we possess. Rightly, then, does Moses reprove the pride of the human heart which arises from forgetfulness of God, if they think that they have gained by their own exertions (*marte suo*) what God has given them of His own pleasure, in order to lay them under obligation to Himself. "To say in the heart," is a Hebraism for thinking in one's self, or reflecting in one's self. He does not, therefore, only require the outward expression of the lips, whereby men profess that they are grateful to God's bounty, (for in this there is often nothing more than hypocrisy and vanity;) but he would have them seriously persuaded that whatever they possess is derived from His sheer beneficence. He has already said, that although when they entered the land they would be fed with bread and other foods, still the manna wherewith God had supported them in the wilderness would be a perpetual proof that man is not sustained by bread only, but by the secret virtue of God, which inspires the principle of life. Another lesson is now added, viz., that because God formerly fed and clothed them gratuitously, and without any act of their own, they thence are taught that, even whilst they strenuously labour and strive, whatever they acquire is not so much the reward of their own industry as the fruit of God's blessing. For he not only affirms that at their first entrance into the land they were enriched, because God dealt with them liberally, but He extends this to the whole

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course of human life, that men obtain nothing by their own vigilance and diligence, except in so far as God blesses them from above. And this he more fully explains immediately afterwards, where he commands them to remember therefore that "it is God who giveth them power," &c. For although God would not have us slumber in inactivity, yet what Paul says of the preaching of the Gospel,[1] holds good also in the most trifling matters, viz., that "neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth," but all things are in the power of God, by whose only influence it is that the earth brings forth fruit. (1 Cor. iii. 7.) We must then recollect that although God reproves man's slothfulness, and punishes it with want and hunger, still they who are active in labour do not get wealth by their own diligence, but by the blessing of God alone. On this doctrine the prayer which Christ dictated to us is founded, in which we ask to have our daily bread given us. But although this relates alike to all mankind, yet Moses appropriates it especially to God's chosen people, in whom God's blessing shines forth most brightly, and at the same time admonishes them that the fact of His supplying them with food depends on the covenant whereby He adopted the race of Abraham to Himself.

EXODUS, CHAPTER XXIII.

20. Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared.

21. Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: for my name *is* in him.

22. But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries.

23. For mine Angel shall go before thee, and bring thee in unto the

20. Ecce, ego mitto Angelum coram te, ut custodiat te in via, et introducat te in locum quem præparavi.

21. Cave a facie ejus, (*ad verbum*, custodias te; *vel*, custoditus sis,) et obtempera voci ejus, ne exacerbes eum, neque enim parcet transgressioni vestræ: nomen meum intra ipsum.

22. Si autem audiendo audieris vocem ejus, et feceris omnia quæ loquor, inimicus ero inimicis tuis, et affligam affligentes te.

23. Nam præcedet Angelus meus faciem tuam, et introducet te ad

[1] A parenthesis is here added in the *Fr.*, ("selon qu'il est prins de la similitude des laboureurs;") as it is taken from the similitude of labourers.

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Amorites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites; and I will cut them off.

25. And ye shall serve the Lord your God, and he shall bless thy bread, and thy water; and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee.

26. There shall nothing cast their young, nor be barren, in thy land: the number of thy days I will fulfil.

27. I will send my fear before thee, and will destroy all the people to whom thou shalt come; and I will make all thine enemies turn their backs unto thee.

28. And I will send hornets before thee, which shall drive out the Hivite, the Canaanite, and the Hittite, from before thee.

29. I will not drive them out from before thee in one year; lest the land become desolate, and the beast of the field multiply against thee.

30. By little and little I will drive them out from before thee, until thou be increased, and inherit the land.

31. And I will set thy bounds from the Red sea even unto the sea of the Philistines, and from the desert unto the river: for I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand; and thou shalt drive them out before thee.

Emorrhæum, Hitthæum, et Perezæum, Chananæum, Hivæum, et Jebusæum: et exterminabo illos.

25. Coletis Jehovam Deum vestrum, et benedicet pani tuo, et aquis tuis: auferamque infirmitatem e medio tui.

26. Non erit abortum faciens et sterilis in terra tua: numerum dierum tuorum complebo.

27. Terrorem mittam coram te, et interficiam omnem populum ad quem venies, et dabo omnes hostes tuos tergum.

28. Mittam crabronem ante te, qui expellat Hivæum, Chananæum, et Hitthæum a facie tua.

29. Non ejiciam illum a facie tua anno uno, ne sit terræ desolatio, et multiplicetur contra te bestia agri.

30. Paulatim paulatim ejiciam illum a facie tua, donec crescas et hæreditate accipias terram.

31. Ponam autem terminum tuum a mari rubro usque ad Philistin, et a deserto usque ad fluvium, nam dabo in manus vestras habitatores terræ.

20. *Behold, I send an Angel before thee.* God here reminds the Israelites that their wellbeing is so connected with the keeping of the Law, that, by neglecting it, they would sorely suffer. For He says that He will be their leader by the hand of an angel, which was a token of His fatherly love for them; but, on the other hand, He threatens that they would not be unpunished if they should despise such great mercy and follow their own lusts, because they will not escape the sight of the angel whom He had appointed to be their guardian. Almost all the Hebrew rabbins,[1] with whom many others agree, too hastily think that

[1] For this opinion, *Corn. a Lapide* quotes *Justin.* contra Tryphon. fol. 58; and *Eusebius*, lib. 4, Demonstr. Evang. 28, and *Raban.*

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this is spoken of Joshua, but the statements, which we shall consider more fully just beyond, by no means are reconcilable with his person. But their mistake is more than sufficiently refuted by this, first of all, that if we understand it of Joshua, the people would have been without the angel as their leader as long as they wandered in the desert; and, besides, it was afterwards said to Moses, "Mine Angel shall go before *thee,*" (Exod. xxxii. 34;) and again, "And I will send an Angel before thee," (Exod. xxxiii. 2.) Moses, too, elsewhere enlarges on this act of God's goodness, that He should have led forth His people by the hand of an angel. (Num. xx. 16.) But what need is there of a long discussion, since already mention has been so often made of the angel of their deliverance? This point ought now to be deemed established, that there is no reference here to a mortal man; and what we have already said should be remembered, that no common angel is designated, but the chief of all angels, who has always been also the Head of the Church. In which matter the authority of Paul should be sufficient for us, when he admonishes the Corinthians not to tempt Christ as their fathers tempted Him in the desert. (1 Cor. x. 9.) We gather this, too, from the magnificent attribute which Moses immediately afterwards assigns to Him, that "the name of God should be in him." I deem this to be of great importance, although it is generally passed over lightly. But let us consider it particularly. When God declares that He will send His angel "to keep them in the way," He makes a demand upon them for their willing obedience, for it would be too base of them to set at nought, or to forget Him whose paternal care towards them they experience. But in the next verse, He seeks by terror to arouse them from their listlessness, where He commands them to beware of His presence, since He would take vengeance on their transgressions; [1]wherein, also, there is a delicate allusion to be observed in the ambiguous meaning of the word employed. For, since שמר, *shamar,* in Hebrew signifies "to guard," after He has said that an angel shall be their guardian, He warns them, on the other hand, that they should guard them-

[1] In the *Fr.* the following paragraphs are omitted.

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selves. Herein the Angel is exalted above the rank of a human being, since He is appointed to be their judge, if the Israelites should offend in any respect; not in the way that judgment is deputed to the Prophets with reference to their doctrine, the power of which is supreme, but because nothing shall be hidden from Him. For Scripture assigns to God alone as His peculiar attribute, that we should walk before His face. What follows is to the same effect, "provoke him not," which is everywhere spoken of God. But, as I have just said, this seems to me to be of most importance, that the name of God was to be in Him, or in the midst of Him, which is equivalent to this, that in Him shall reside my majesty and glory; and, therefore, He shall possess both the knowledge of hearts, as well as dominion, and the power of judgment. Besides, we have already said that there is no absurdity in designating Christ by the name of the Angel, because He was not yet the Incarnate Mediator, but as often as He appeared to the ancient people He gave an indication of His future mission.

22. *But if thou shalt indeed obey.* He moderates the terror with which He had inspired them for two reasons,—*first*, that He may rather gently attract them than force them by the fear of punishment; *secondly*, lest, if they imagine that the Angel is formidable to them, the anxiety conceived in their minds should deaden their perception of His mercy and favour. Now, although I postpone to another place the promises whereby their obedience to the Law was confirmed, I have thought it right to include this among the exhortations or eulogiums whereby the dignity of the Law is enhanced, because it relates to the time past, for thus is the expression to be paraphrased, "Take heed that ye respond to God who deals so liberally with you. The promises which He made to your fathers as to the inheritance of the land, He is now ready to perform, unless your iniquity should stand in the way. Make room, then, for His grace, that, by the hand of the Angel, He may lead you into His rest." In order to stimulate them still more, He points out to them their need of His aid, as though He had said that nothing could be more miserable than their case, unless they were

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protected from so many enemies by His defence, for He enumerates several most important nations to which they would be by no means a match unless they should fight under the guidance of the Angel. He says, therefore, that if they only obey His Law, there is no occasion for them to be afraid, for that He will destroy by His own power alone all that shall rise against them to resist them.

25. *And ye shall serve the Lord your God.* It is true that this promise is very similar to others, to which I have assigned a peculiar place, but it has this difference, that, in inviting the people to be zealous in keeping the Law, it sets before their eyes the effect of the covenant already made with their fathers, in order that they may more cheerfully receive the Law. Therefore there was good reason for my saying just before that the promises which refer to the past have their appropriate place here, where their minds are prepared to obey God and keep His Law, because the race of Abraham God had chosen to Himself, that He may continually visit them with His favour. He therefore promises them His blessing on their bread and water and bodily health, for on these three things depend the condition of our present life. Two other things He adds—fecundity in generation, and length of days. The sum is, that they had been prevented by God's loving-kindness, in order that they might willingly honour Him, and that now all He had promised them was close at hand, if only they responded to His grace. But, although the fertility of the land was great, and its productions various and abundant, no mention is here made, as in other places, of wine or oil, but only of simple food, as if He had said that the necessary supports of life should not be wanting to them.

27. *I will send my fear before thee.* It is very clear from these words that God's fatherly love towards the people is magnified, to prepare their minds to submit themselves to the yoke of the Law. Therefore their reward, if they should keep the Law, is not so much set before them here, as shame is denounced upon them if they should be ungrateful to God their deliverer, who was soon after about to give them the en-

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joyment of the promised land. Moreover, God is said to send forth His fear, when by His secret inspiration He depresses men's hearts. Whence we gather that fear, as well as courage, is in His hand. Of this no doubtful examples exist in every history, if only God obtained His due rights amongst men. It will often happen that the courage of brave men gives way to alarm, and on the other hand, that the timid and cowardly awake to sudden bravery. Where the cause is not discovered, the profane have recourse to the hidden dominion of fortune to account for it, or imagine that men's minds have been stupified by Pan or the Satyrs.[1] Let us however learn, that it is in God's power to bend men's hearts either way, so as both to cast down the courageous with terror, as well as to animate the timid. From this passage what we read in Ps. xliv. 2, 3, is taken,—"Thou didst drive out the heathen with thine hand, and plantedst them, (*our fathers.*) For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them," &c. Moreover, Rahab, who was both a harlot and belonged to an unbelieving nation, still acknowledged this, when she said to the spies, "our hearts did melt; for the Lord your God is God in heaven above, and in the earth beneath." (Josh. ii. 11.) She does not, indeed, express what we have here, that they were smitten from heaven with internal fear, but only says that their terror came from a sense of God's power; still she admits that it is no human cause which makes them thus to tremble. Moses ascends higher, that God puts to flight or routs their enemies not only by setting before them external objects of terror, but that He works also inwardly in their hearts, that they may fly in confusion and alarm; as it follows in the end of the verse, "I will make them turn their backs," as much as to say, that He would cause them

[1] "Les phantomes ou tritons."—*Fr.* "De Panicis terroribus prudentissima doctrina proponitur: Natura enim rerum omnibus viventibus indidit metum, ac formidinem, vitæ atque essentiæ suæ conservatricem, ac mala ingruentia vitantem, et depellentem: veruntamen eadem natura modum tenere nescia est; sed timoribus salutaribus semper vanos, et inanes admiscet, adeo ut omnia (si intus conspici darentur) Panicis terroribus plenissima sint; præsertim humana, quæ superstitione (quæ vere nihil aliud, quam Panicus terror est) in immensum laborant; maxime temporibus duris, et trepidis, et adversis."—*Bacon. de Sapientia Veterum.*

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immediately to retreat, and not even to sustain the sight of the people.

28. *And I will send hornets.* Although that secret terror, of which He had made mention, would be sufficient to put their enemies to flight, He states that there would also be other ready means, to rout them without any danger, or much difficulty to His people. Yet He does not threaten to send great and powerful warriors, but only insects and hornets; as much as to say, that God would be so entirely propitious to His people that He would prepare and arm even the smallest animals to destroy their enemies.[1] Thus is the easiness of their victory shewn; because, without the use of the sword, hornets alone would suffice to rout and exterminate their enemies. He adds, however, an exception, lest the Israelites should complain, if the land should not immediately lie open to them empty and cleared of its old inhabitants; and He reminds them that it would be advantageous to them that He should consume their enemies by degrees. Although, therefore, God might at first sight seem to perform less than He had promised, and thus to retract or diminish somewhat from His grace; yet Moses shews that in this respect also He was considering their welfare, lest the wild beasts should rush in upon the bare and desert land, and prove more troublesome than the enemies themselves. It came to pass indeed, through the people's slackness, that they were long mixed with their enemies, because they executed with too little energy the vengeance of God; yea, His menace against them by the mouth of Joshua was then fulfilled, "if ye cleave unto the remnant of these nations, know for a certainty that the Lord your God will no more drive out any of these nations from before you; but they shall be snares and traps unto you, and scourges in your sides, and thorns in your eyes, until ye perish from off this good land, which the Lord your God hath given you." (Josh. xxiii.

[1] Few historical conjectures can be more striking than that of Dr. Hales, quoted in the Illustrated Commentary on Joshua xxiv. 12, who supposes the "arma Jovis," by which Virgil represents Saturn as having been driven to Italy, to have been the hornets here spoken of, and identifies the fugitive monarch with one of the Amorite kings, expelled before the armies of Joshua.

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12, 13.) The fact, therefore, that it was later and at the end of David's reign that these wicked and heathen nations were exterminated so as to deliver up to the people the quiet possession of the land, must be attributed to their own fault, since unbelief and ingratitude rendered them inactive, and disposed to indulge their ease. But, if no such inactivity had delayed the fulfilment of the promise, they would have found that the final destruction of the nations by God would have been delayed no longer than was good for them.

31. *And I will set thy bounds.* There is no question that He confirms here the covenant which He had made with Abraham in somewhat different words. More briefly had it been said to Abraham, "Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates." (Gen. xv. 18.) Here the four cardinal points of the compass are enumerated, and, instead of the Nile, the other sea is mentioned, which is opposite to the sea of Tarshish.[1] Nor is it anything new which the Israelites are commanded to expect; but they are reminded of what they had heard of by tradition even from the time of Abraham. Hence what I have already said is more clearly perceived, viz., that the ancient covenant is set before them, in order that they may respond to God's gratuitous favour, and on their part honour and worship Him, who had already anticipated them with His mercy. Furthermore, when they had robbed themselves of this blessing, God applied a remedy to their iniquity, by raising up a new condition of things under David, to whom this promise is repeated, as is seen in Psalm lxxii. Therefore, although even up to that time their inheritance was in a measure incomplete (*truncata*),[2] yet, under this renovated condition, they reached its full and solid en-

[1] Corn. a Lapide thus explains these boundaries,—"God here gives the boundaries of the promised land with respect to the cardinal points; for it has the Red Sea as its southern limit; on the west, the sea of the Palestini, or the Mediterranean, whose shores are inhabited by the Philistines; (whence Scripture often speaks of 'the Sea' to express the west;) on the east, it has the Arabian Desert, lying between it and Egypt; and, finally, to the north it has the River Euphrates, which is called *par excellence* (autonomasian) the River."

[2] "Quand Dieu a establi son Eglise;" when God established His Church.—*Fr.*

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joyment. But since that prosperity and extension of the kingdom was not lasting, but after Solomon's death began to fail, and at last its dignity was destroyed; therefore Zechariah uses the same words in declaring its ultimate and perfect restoration. (Zech. ix. 10.) Thence we gather that by the coming of Christ this prophecy at length obtained its perfect accomplishment; not that the race of Abraham then began to bear rule within the bounds here laid down, but inasmuch as Christ embraced the four quarters of the globe under His dominion, from the east even to the west, and from the north even to the south. Meanwhile the power of David was the prototype of this boundless reign, when he acquired the sovereignty of the promised land. We ought not to think it unreasonable that the ancient people should be kept out of some portion of that inheritance which was to be expected by them in accordance with the covenant; but rather does God's incredible goodness display itself, in that, when they had altogether disinherited themselves, He still combated their iniquity, and failed not to shew practically His faithfulness. We may see the same thing in the calling of the Gentiles; for, if the Jews had continued faithful, the Gentiles would have been joined with them, as it had been said, "In those days it shall come to pass that ten men shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew," (Zech. viii. 23;) but their rebellion brought it about, that God only gathered from among them the first-fruits of His Church, and afterwards the Gentiles were substituted in the place which they had left empty. In this way neither did this people retain their right of primogeniture, neither did God's truth cease to stand firm, as Paul more fully explains in the eleventh chapter of Romans.

DEUTERONOMY, CHAPTER XXIX.

29. The secret *things belong* unto the Lord our God; but those *things which are* revealed *belong* unto us and to our children for ever, that *we* may do all the words of this law.

29. Secreta sunt Jehovæ Deo nostro: revelata autem nobis et filiis nostris usque in sæculum, ut faciamus omnia verba Legis hujus.

DEUT. xxx. 11. For this com-

11. Præceptum hoc quod præci-

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mandment, which I command thee this day, it *is* not hidden from thee, neither *is* it far off:

12. It *is* not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it?

13. Neither *is* it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it?

14. But the word *is* very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.

pio tibi hodie, non est absconditum a te, nec procul remotum.

12. Non est in cœlis ut dicas, Quis nobis ascendet in cœlum, ut deferat illud ad nos, et annuntiet nobis, ut ipsum faciamus?

13. Nec est ultra mare, ut dicas, Quis nobis trajiciet mare ut deferat illud ad nos, et annuntiet nobis, ut ipsum faciamus?

14. Certe valde propinquus est tibi sermo in ore tuo, et in corde tuo, ut facias ipsum.

DEUT. XXIX. 29. *The secret things belong.* The conciseness and brevity of this passage has rendered its meaning ambiguous; still there is no necessity for discussing the various expositions of it. I will only shortly touch upon those most generally accepted, lest they should lead to error. The meaning is forced which some of the Hebrews[1] give it, viz., that God is the sole avenger of hidden crimes, whilst those transgressions, which come to the knowledge of men, should be punished by earthly judges; for here the execution of punishment is not the subject in discussion, but Moses is simply commending the use of the doctrine of the Law. The opinion of those who conceive that the excellency of the Law is maintained, because God has manifested by it His secret things, would be more probable, if the rules of grammar did not oppose it; for the words are not to be read connectedly. "The secret things of God are revealed unto us," since the ה, or demonstrative pronoun,[2] which is adjoined to both, does not permit this any more than the copula which stands between them. To me there appears no doubt that, by *antithesis*, there is a comparison here made between the doctrine openly set forth in the Law, and the hidden and incomprehensible counsel of God, concerning which it is not lawful

[1] *S. M.* quotes Aben-Ezra as saying, "The secret things done by men belong to God, that he may punish them. But the things which become manifest, or are publicly done, belong to us, and such things we are bound to punish." Where the ה demonstrative is repeated with the conjunction, as noticed by *C.*, our *A. V.* has properly *but those.*—*W.*

[2] In *C.'s* Latin "ה agedia," or as spelt in Buxtorf's Thesaurus Gram. Ling. Sanctæ, Lib. ii. c. 5, "ה hajediha, that is הידיעה, translatable *which maketh known*, is the name given to the prefix ה, when its effect is demonstrative."—*W.*

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to inquire. In my opinion, therefore, the copula is used for the adversative particle; as though it were said, "God indeed retains to Himself secret things, which it neither concerns nor profits us to know, and which surpass our comprehension; but these things, which He has declared to us, belong to us and to our children." It is a remarkable passage, and especially deserving of our observation, for by it audacity and excessive curiosity are condemned, whilst pious minds are aroused to be zealous in seeking instruction. We know how anxious men are to understand things, the knowledge of which is altogether unprofitable, and even the investigation of them injurious. All of them would desire to be God's counsellors, and to penetrate into the deepest recesses of heaven, nay, they would search into its very cabinets. Hence a heathen poet truly says,—

> "Nil mortalibus arduum est:
> Cœlum ipsum petimus stultitia."—Hor. Od. i. 3-37.
>
> "Nought for mortals is too high;
> Our folly reaches to the sky."

On the other hand, what God plainly sets before us, and would have familiarly known, is either neglected, or turned from in disgust, or put far away from us, as if it were too obscure. In the first clause, then, Moses briefly reproves and restrains that temerity which leaps beyond the bounds imposed by God; and in the latter, exhorts us to embrace the doctrine of the Law, in which God's will is declared to us, as if He were openly speaking to us; and thus he encounters the folly of those who fly from the light presented to them, and wrongfully accuse of obscurity that doctrine, wherein God has let Himself down to the measure of our understanding. In sum, he declares that God is the best master to all who come to Him as disciples, because He faithfully and clearly explains to them all that it is useful for them to know. The perpetuity of the doctrine is also asserted, and that it never is to be let go, or to become obsolete by the lapse of ages. How far the Law is perpetual I have more fully discussed in the Second Book of the Institutes, chap. xi. The rule of just and pious living even now retains its force, although we are delivered from the yoke of

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bondage and from the curse; but the coming of Christ has put an end to its ceremonies in such a way as to prove more certainly that they were not mere vain and empty shadows. Lastly, Moses requires obedience of the people, and reminds them that the Law was not only given that the Israelites might know what was right, but that they might do all that God taught. True is it indeed that all His precepts cannot be fully obeyed; but the perfection which is required, compels those to ask for pardon who otherwise feel themselves to be exposed to God's judgment, as will be hereafter explained. Besides, we must observe that the doctrine that we must keep the whole Law has this object, that men should not separate one commandment from the others, and think that they have done their duty by performing only a part of it; since God admits no such divorce, having forbidden us to steal no less than to kill. (James ii. 11.)

DEUT. XXX. 11. *For this commandment, which I command thee.* This declaration is like the preceding, and tends to the same end; for Moses commends in it the Law, on account of its easiness; because God does not propound to us obscure enigmas to keep our minds in suspense, and to torment us with difficulties, but teaches familiarly whatever is necessary, according to the capacity, and consequently the ignorance of the people. Therefore, in Isaiah (xlv. 19) He reproves the Jews for having wandered in darkness through their own depravity and folly; because He had *not spoken* to them *in secret, nor said in vain*[1] *to the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me.* But Moses here invites them to learn, because they had an easy and clear method of instruction set before their eyes, and would not lose their labour; for we know that it is very often made an excuse for idleness, if great labour without much profit is to be applied to deep and difficult studies. Moses, therefore, declares that the Law is not hard to be understood, so as to demand inordinate fatigue in its study; but that God there speaks distinctly and explicitly, and that nothing is required of them but diligent application. More-

[1] In *A. V.*, it will be remembered, the words, "in vain," are connected with "Seek ye me." "I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain."

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over, he thus takes away from them every pretext for ignorance, since, with so much light, they cannot err, except by wilfully blinding themselves, or shutting their eyes. Whence, also, we gather, how impious are the babblings of the Papists that the Scripture is beset by thick darkness, and how wicked is their driving away the people from approaching it, as if it were some labyrinth. Surely they thus must needs accuse the Holy Spirit of falsehood, who so abundantly asserts its comprehensibleness, (*claritatem,*) or else they malign itself by their blasphemous taunts. But if the ancient people were left without excuse, unless they kept in the right way, when they had the Law for their mistress and director, our stupidity must be worthy of double and triple condemnation, if we do not make progress in the Gospel, wherein God has opened all the treasures of His wisdom, as far as is sufficient for salvation. The Sophists[1] improperly and ignorantly wrest this passage to prove the freedom of the will. (They allege[2]) that Moses here declares the precepts of the Law not to be above our reach. What? Does he state that the keeping of them is within the compass of our strength? Surely the words convey nothing of the sort; neither can this sense be elicited from them, if his intention be duly weighed. For he merely encourages the Jews, and commands them to be diligent disciples of the Law, because they will easily understand whatever is enjoined by God therein. But the power of performance is a very different thing from understanding. Besides, Paul, with very good reason, accommodates this passage to the Gospel, (Rom. x. 8;) because it would profit nothing to comprehend the doctrine itself in the mind, unless reverence and a serious disposition to obey be superadded. But he takes it for granted, that to have a good will is so far from being in our own power, that we are not even competent to think aright. Hence it follows, that what is here stated falls to the ground as frivolous, and spoken to no purpose, if it be applied simply to the Law. Paul also considers another thing, viz., that because the Law requires a perfect right-

[1] Les Theologiens de la Papauté.—*Fr.*
[2] Added from the French.

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eousness, it cannot be received by any mortal fruitfully; for however any one may study to obey God, yet he will still be far from perfection; and, therefore, it is necessary to come to the Gospel, wherein that rigorous requirement is relaxed, because, through the interposition of pardon, the will to obey is pleasing to God instead of perfect obedience. For Paul insists on the latter verse, "The word is nigh in the mouth, and in the heart, that the people may do it." Now, it is clear that men's hearts are strongly and obstinately opposed to the Law; and that in the Law itself is contained only a dead and deadly letter; how then could the literal doctrine have a place in the heart? But if God, by the Spirit of regeneration, corrects the depravity of the heart and softens its hardness, this is not the property of the Law, but of the Gospel. Again, because in the children of God, even after they are regenerated, there always abide the remainders of carnal desires, no mortal will be found who can perform the Law. But in the Gospel God receives, with fatherly indulgence, what is not absolutely perfect. The word of God, therefore, does not begin to penetrate into the heart, and to produce its proper fruit in the lips, until Christ shines upon us with His Spirit and gratuitous pardon. Wherefore Paul most truly concludes that this is *the word of faith* which is preached in the Gospel; both because the Law does not efficaciously lead men to God, and because the keeping of it is impossible, on account of its extreme rigour. But this is the peculiar blessing of the new covenant, that the Law is written on men's hearts, and engraven on their inward parts; whilst that severe requirement is relaxed, so that the vices under which believers still labour are no obstacle to their partial and imperfect obedience being pleasant to God.

LEVITICUS, CHAPTER XXVII.

34. These *are* the commandments, which the Lord commanded Moses, for the children of Israel in mount Sinai.	34. Hæc præcepta quæ præcepit Jehova Mosi ad filios Israel in monte Sinai.
DEUT. i. 1. These *be* the words	1. Hæc sunt verba quæ loquutus

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which Moses spake unto all Israel on this side Jordan in the wilderness, in the plain over against the Red *sea*, between Paran, and Tophel, and Laban, and Hazeroth, and Di-zahab.

2. (*There are* eleven days' *journey* from Horeb, by the way of mount Seir, unto Kadesh-barnea.)

3. And it came to pass in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first *day* of the month, *that* Moses spake unto the children of Israel, according unto all that the Lord had given him in commandment unto them;

4. After he had slain Sihon the king of the Amorites, which dwelt in Heshbon, and Og the king of Bashan, which dwelt at Astaroth in Edrei.

5. On this side Jordan, in the land of Moab, began Moses to declare this law, saying.

DEUT. iv. 44. And this *is* the law which Moses set before the children of Israel:

45. These *are* the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgments, which Moses spake unto the children of Israel, after they came forth out of Egypt:

46. On this side Jordan, in the valley over against Beth-peor, in the land of Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt at Heshbon, whom Moses and the children of Israel smote, after they were come forth out of Egypt:

47. And they possessed his land, and the land of Og king of Bashan, two kings of the Amorites, which *were* on this side Jordan, toward the sun-rising;

48. From Aroer, which *is* by the bank of the river Arnon, even unto mount Sion, which *is* Hermon,

49. And all the plain on this side Jordan eastward, even unto the sea of the plain, under the springs of Pisgah.

DEUT. xxix. 1. These *are* the words of the covenant which the Lord commanded Moses to make

est Moses ad omnem Israelem trans Jordanem in deserto, in planitie, e regione Suph, inter Paran et Thophel, et Laban, et Hazeroth, et Dizahab.

2. Undecim dies sunt ab Horeb, itineris montis Seir, usque ad Cades Barnea.

3. Fuit autem quadragesimo anno, undecimo mense, prima mensis, loquutus est Moses ad filios Israel juxta omnia quæ præceperat Jehova ad illos.

4. Posteaquam percusserat Sehon regem Emorrhæorum qui habitabat in Hesbon, et Og regem Basan, qui habitabat in Astaroth in Edrei.

5. Trans Jordanem in terra Moab incepit Moses explanare legem hanc, dicendo.

44. Hæc est Lex quam proposuit Moses coram filiis Israel.

45. Hæc testimonia et statuta et judicia quæ pronuntiavit Moses filiis Israel, quum egressi essent ex Ægypto.

46. Trans Jordanem in valle e regione Beth-peor in terra Sehon regis Emorrhæorum, qui habitabat in Esbon: quem percussit Moses et filii Israel, quum egressi essent ex Ægypto.

47. Et possederunt terram ejus, et terram Og regis Basan, duorum regum Emorrhæorum, qui erant trans Jordanem ad ortum solis.

48. Ab Aroer qui erat juxta ripam torrentis Arnon, usque ad montem Sion qui est Hermon.

49. Et universam solitudinem trans Jordanem ad orientem usque ad mare planitiei, sub effusionibus aquarum.

1. Hæc sunt verba fœderis quæ præcepit Jehova Mosi ut pangeret cum filiis Israel in terra Moab præ-

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with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, beside the covenant which he made with them in Horeb.

ter fœdus quod pepigerat cum ipsis in Horeb.

LEVIT. XXVII. 34. *These are the commandments.* This first passage commends the Law, which was promulgated and written on the two tables, together with the declarations which were annexed to it, to explain more fully the mind of God. For God did not only propound the Decalogue, but also interpreted what He briefly summed up therein. Moreover, Moses endeavours to gain their belief of this doctrine, first, from its authority, because it was delivered by God; and secondly, because he had not assumed the office of lawgiver, but had been appointed by God, and called to undertake it. He demands obedience from the children of Israel, because he had been sent to them as their teacher and master.

DEUT. I. 1. *These are the words.* These two latter passages properly belong to the *supplements*, wherein God afterwards more clearly and familiarly illustrated the Law previously given by Him; they comprehend also exhortations, by which He subdued the people's minds to obedience, and eulogies, by which He commended and confirmed the Law. The sum is, that Moses is appointed the minister and ambassador of God, who by his mouth prescribes to Israel all that is right and just. But when he says, "beside the covenant, which he made with them in Horeb," (xxix. 1,) he does not indicate that anything was added, except in so far as it was necessary that the Decalogue should be more fully explained, lest its brevity should render it obscure to an ignorant and slow-hearted people. For God did not, like earthly kings, learn from experience to enrich His law by new precepts, but considered the people's dull and weak understanding. The particle of exception, "beside," does not, therefore, designate anything additional, but only signifies that God had again repeated His covenant, that it might be more distinctly and certainly understood. In which respect He gave an extraordinary proof of His indulgence, that previous to their entering the land, He renewed His covenant about forty years after its first promulgation, and added a

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clear exposition of it, because He had then to do with a new generation. For this reason the place is expressly mentioned, because from thence the lapse of time is made evident.

DEUT. IV. 44. *And this is the Law.* This last passage refers to the same thing, viz., that the Law was promulgated anew when the people had now reached the threshold of the promised land, in order that they might be more disposed to obedience, especially when the two tribes and a half had now, by the conquest of the Amorites, obtained a resting-place and a home; for this is the reason why their habitation is mentioned, because the taste of the favour already received ought to stir up their zeal to proceed more cheerfully. We shall elsewhere remark on the country and names of places. It is sufficient here to recollect, that the memory of the Law was renewed, after their inheritance without the promised land had been obtained by the sons of Reuben and Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh, and when their assured possession was before the eyes of the rest. But Moses shews that, although he might explain the Law at fuller length, still nothing had been added to that summary which was originally promulgated; but her ather indicates, that whatever he had taught them during the forty years, had had no other object than that they might more faithfully and exactly keep the Law of God.

The Law.

The First Commandment.

EXODUS, CHAPTER XX.

3. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.	3. Non erunt tibi dii alieni coram facie mea.

A REPETITION OF THE SAME.

DEUT. v. 7. Thou shalt have none other gods before me.	7. Non erunt tibi dii alieni coram facie mea.

EXOD. XX. 3. *Thou shalt have no other gods before me.* In this commandment God enjoins that He alone should be

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worshipped, and requires a worship free from all superstition. For although it seems to be a simple prohibition, yet must we deduce an affirmation from the negative, as will be more apparent from the following words. Therefore does He set Himself before them, in order that the Israelites may look to Him alone; and claims His own just right, in order that it may not be transferred elsewhere. All do not agree in the exposition of the words, for some construe the word פָּנִים,[1] *panim*, "anger," as if it were said, "Thou shalt not make to thyself other gods to provoke my anger;" and I admit that the Hebrew word is often used in this sense. The other interpretation, however, seems to me the more correct, "Make not to thyself gods before my face." Yet still there remains a difference of opinion, for people are not agreed as to the particle עַל, *gnel*. Some explain it, "Make not to thyself gods *above* me, or whom thou mayest prefer to me;" and they quote the passage in Deut. xxi. 15-17, wherein God forbids a man, if he have two wives, and children by both, to transfer the rights of primogeniture to the second *before the face* of the first-born. But though we admit that a comparison is there made between the elder and the younger, still it would be too frigid an interpretation here to say that God demands nothing more than that other gods should not obtain the higher place; whereas He neither suffers them to be likened to Him, nor even to be joined with Him as companions;[2] for religion is defiled and corrupted as soon as God's glory is diminished in the very least degree. And we know that when the Israelites worshipped their Baalim, they did not so substitute them in the place of God as to put Him altogether aside, and assign to them the supreme power; nevertheless, this was an intolerable profanation of God's worship, and moreover an impious transgression of this precept, to choose for themselves patrons in whom some part of the Deity should be lodged; because if God *have not alone* the pre-eminence, His majesty is so far obscured. I consider,

[1] פָּנִים, signifying properly the face or countenance, is sometimes used by metonymy for those passions which shew themselves in the countenance.—*W.*

[2] Addition in *Fr.*, "encore qu'on les estime inferieurs;" even though they be counted his inferiors.

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therefore, the genuine sense to be, that the Israelites should not make to themselves any gods, whom they might oppose to the true and only God. For in Hebrew the expression, *before the face*, generally means *over against;* therefore God would not have companions obtruded upon Him, and placed as it were in His sight. Meanwhile, it seems probable to me that He alludes to that manifestation of Himself which ought to have retained His people in sincere piety; for true and pure religion was so revealed in the Law, that God's face in a manner shone forth therein. The case was different with the Gentiles, who, although they might rashly make to themselves false gods, still would not do so before the face of God, which was unknown to them. Let us then understand, after all, that those alone are accounted the legitimate worshippers of God who bid adieu to all figments, and cleave to Him alone. Nor can it be doubted that these words comprehend the inward worship of God, since this commandment differs from the next, whereby external idolatry will be seen to be condemned. It is sufficiently notorious, that men may make to themselves gods in other ways besides in statues, and pictures, and in visible forms. If any should adore the angels instead of God, or should foolishly imagine any other secret divinity, none will deny that he would offend against this Law. God, therefore, calls for the affections of the heart, that He alone may be spiritually worshipped; and the expression "before my face," may be not inaptly referred to this; because, although their impiety, who secretly turn aside to false worship, and cherish their errors within their own bosoms, may be able to evade the eyes of men, yet their hypocrisy and treachery will not escape the notice of God. Hence, again, it follows, that the one God is not rightly worshipped, unless He be separated from all figments. Wherefore it is not enough to make use of His name, unless all corruptions opposed to His word be laid aside; and thence we arrive at the distinction between true religion and false superstitions; for since God has prescribed to us how He would be worshipped by us, whenever we turn away in the very smallest degree from this rule, we make to ourselves other gods, and degrade Him from His right place.

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PASSAGES WHICH HAVE REFERENCE TO THE EXPOSITION OF THIS COMMANDMENT.

DEUT. VI. 4. Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God *is* one Lord.	4. Audi, Israel, Jehova Deus noster Deus unus est.
DEUT. VI. 13. Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve him.	13. Jehovam Deum tuum timebis, et ipsum solum coles.
DEUT. X. 20. Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God; him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou cleave.	20. Jehovam Deum tuum timebis, eum coles, eique adhærebis.
DEUT. VI. 16. Ye shall not tempt the Lord your God, as ye tempted *him* in Massah.	16. Non tentabitis Jehovam Deum vestrum, sicut tentastis in Masa.

DEUT. VI. 4. *Hear, O Israel.* When Moses proclaims that God is One, the statement is not confined to His sole essence, which is incomprehensible, but must be also understood of His power and glory, which had been manifested to the people; as though he had said, that they would be guilty of rebellion unless they abode in the One God, who had laid them under such obligations to Himself. Therefore he not only calls him Jehovah, but at the same time infers that He is the God of that people whom he addresses, "Thy God." Thus all other deities are brought to nought, and the people are commanded to fly and detest whatever withdraws their minds from the pure knowledge of Him; for although His name may be left to Him, still He is stripped of His majesty, as soon as He is mixed up with a multitude of others. Thus He says by Ezekiel, (xx. 39,) "Go ye, serve ye every one his idols;" in which words He not only repudiates all mixed worship, but testifies that He would rather be accounted nothing than not be worshipped undividedly. The orthodox Fathers aptly used this passage against the Arians;[1] because, since Christ is everywhere called God, He is undoubtedly the same Jehovah who declares Himself to be the One God; and this is asserted with the same force respecting the Holy Spirit.

[1] *Vide* St. Ath. Or. iii., *contra* Ar. sec. 7, 8. Jones of Nayland's "Cath. Doctrine of Trinity," chap. iv. 2, sums up the argument concisely and well.

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DEUT. VI. 13. *Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God.* Hence it is more evident why He has just declared that there is One God, viz., that He alone may be undividedly worshipped; for unless our minds are fixed on Him alone, religion is torn, as it were, into divers parts, and this is soon followed by a labyrinth of errors. But, first, he calls for reverence, and then for the worship which may testify and demonstrate it. "Fear" contains in it the idea of subjection, when men devote themselves to God, because His terrible majesty keeps them in their proper place. Hence results worship, which is the proof of piety. But we must observe that the fear enjoined in this passage is voluntary, so that men influenced by it desire nothing more than to obey God. When I stated, therefore, that God brings us under the yoke by a sense of His power and greatness, I did not understand that a violent and servile obedience is extorted from us; I only wished to affirm that men cannot be induced to obey God, before they have been subdued by fear; because their innate corruption always carries with it a contempt for religion, and a spirit of licentiousness. Therefore, in Jeremiah (v. 22), in order to exhort men to fear, He sets forth His terrible power in restraining the strength of the sea; but this fear leads on His true worshippers further. In the other passage which we have subjoined from Deut. x., the word *cleave* again confirms the truth, that as soon as men decline from God in the least degree, His worship is corrupted. For this is the meaning of that union with Himself to which He calls His worshippers, that they should be, as it were, glued to Him, and should not look elsewhere.

16. *Ye shall not tempt the Lord.* Since the doctrine here should undoubtedly be referred to the First Commandment, we gather from it that this is the main foundation of piety, to give to Him what is His own, and to diminish nothing from the prerogative which He claims. As we have already seen, unbelief was the fountain and cause of the tempting in Massah, for when the people neither relied on God's providence nor rested on His paternal love, they burst forth into impatience, and at length advanced so far as to think that God was not with them, unless He complied with their

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wicked lusts. We perceive, then, that God cannot be rightly worshipped unless when He has His peculiar attributes acknowledged. Whence, also, it appears that true piety cannot be dissevered from faith, because, if we confess that every desirable good dwells in Him, we shall expect and seek for all things from Him; we shall also patiently and contentedly allow ourselves to be governed by His will, and, in a word, give up ourselves and our lives into His hands.

LEVITICUS, CHAPTER XIX.

1. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,
2. Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, Ye shall be holy: for I the Lord your God *am* holy.

1. Loquutus est Jehova ad Mosen, dicendo:
2. Loquere ad universum cœtum filiorum Israel, et dic eis, Sancti estote, quia ego sanctus Jehova Deus vester.

1. *And the Lord spake.* This is the object of the exhortation: first, that they should not measure the service of God by their own conceits, but rather by His nature; and secondly, that they should begin by studying[1] to be holy. For nothing is harder than for men to divest themselves of their carnal affections to prepare for imitating God. Besides, they willingly lie slumbering in their own filthiness, and seek to cloak it by the outward appearance of religion. Here, then, they are recalled to the imitation of God, who, in adopting them, desired that they should bear His image, just as good and undegenerate children resemble their father. If any should pretend to equal God, his emulation would be madness; but although the most perfect come very far short even of the angels, yet the weakness of the very humblest does not prevent him from aspiring after the example of God. To this point did all the ceremonies tend, whereby God exercised His ancient people unto holiness, as we shall hereafter see. Although this declaration does not occur once only, yet because it is annexed in other places to special precepts in order to their confirmation, let it suffice at present to apprehend the general doctrine it contains.

[1] "Pour le servir deuement, ils commencent par ce bout, de se purifier de toutes souillures;" in order to serve Him duly, they should begin by purifying themselves from all uncleanness.—*Fr.*

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DEUTERONOMY, CHAPTER VI.

14. Ye shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the people which *are* round about you;

15. (For the Lord thy God *is* a jealous God among you;) lest the anger of the Lord thy God be kindled against thee, and destroy thee from off the face of the earth.

14. Non ambulabitis post deos alienos e diis populorum qui undique circum vos sunt:

15. Quoniam Deus zelotes Jehova Deus tuus in medio tui est: ne forte irascatur furor Jehovæ Dei tui in te, et disperdat te e superficie terræ.

14. *Ye shall not go after.* In this passage Moses commands the people not to turn away from the simple service of God, although examples of superstition may present themselves to their sight on every side. For this was a very destructive temptation, that none could be anywhere found who subscribed to the doctrine of the Law, although the respective nations had some religion, or at any rate the name of it existing among them. Since, therefore, these various forms of worship were so many temptations to forsake the right way, it was needful to provide against the danger betimes, and so to establish the authority of the One God, that the Jews might have courage to despise the common belief of all the Gentiles. A threat is added, that vengeance would not be far off if they should fall away into these superstitions, since *God is a jealous God,* and dwelling *among them.* As to the former epithet, I am about to say more under the Second Commandment. Meanwhile, let my readers observe that God is called jealous, because He permits no rivalry which may detract from His glory, nor does He suffer the service which is due to Him alone to be transferred elsewhere. When He reminds the people that He dwells among them, it is partly to inspire terror by reason of His presence, and partly to reprove indirectly their ingratitude, if they should forsake Him, and seek for themselves gods who are afar off.

DEUTERONOMY, CHAPTER XVIII.

9. When thou art come into the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations.

10. There shall not be found among you *any one* that maketh his

9. Quum tu ingressus fueris in terram quam Jehova Deus tuus dat tibi, ne discas ad faciendum secundum abominationes gentium istarum.

10. Non inveniatur in medio tui qui traducat filium suum, (*ad ver-*

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son or his daughter to pass through the fire, *or* that useth divination, *or* an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch,

11. Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer.

12. For all that do these things *are* an abomination unto the Lord: and because of these abominations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee.

13. Thou shalt be perfect with the Lord thy God.

14. For these nations, which thou shalt possess, hearkened unto observers of times, and unto diviners: but as for thee, the Lord thy God hath not suffered thee so *to do*.

bum, Transire faciat,) vel filiam suam per ignem, qui divinet divinationes, augur, magus, et incantator,

11. Colligans colligationes, consulens Pythonem, prognostes, (*vel*, ariolus,) et qui sciscitatur a mortuis.

12. Abominatio enim est Jehovæ quisquis facit hæc, et propter abominationes istas evellit eos Jehova Deus tuus a facie tua.

13. Integer eris cum Jehova Deo tuo.

14. Nam gentes istæ quas tu obtinebis attentæ sunt ad prognostas (*vel*, ariolos) et ad divinos: quod ad te, non ita permisit tibi Jehova Deus tuus.

9. *When thou art come.* It is too well known from experience how eagerly the human race lays hold of bad examples, and how prone it is to imitate them. Especially those who come into a foreign land, accustom themselves readily to its manners and customs. This is the reason why God expressly commands the Israelites to beware, lest, when they come into the land of Canaan, they should catch any infection from its inhabitants. The doctrine, indeed, is universal in its application; but there was a necessity for providing against the danger which immediately impended. Moreover, Moses explains clearly in this passage what it is to have other gods, viz., to mix up the worship of God with things profane, since its purity is only thus maintained by banishing from it all uncongenial superstitions. The sum, therefore, is, that the people of God should abstain from all the inventions of men, whereby pure and simple religion is adulterated. In general, God wished to deter His worshippers from every fallacy whereby, from the beginning, Satan has deluded and fascinated miserable men; but He enumerates certain particular points, which by usage and custom had obtained the greatest prevalence. But in order that God's purpose may be more apparent, it is expedient to observe what it is that displeases Him in these vices which He condemns. Since men have a natural desire after knowledge, even in the superstitious this has always proceeded

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from a good principle, inasmuch as God has implanted it in the minds of all, when He would distinguish our race from the lower animals. Neither in this was there anything to be reprehended, that men, being conscious of their own ignorance, conceived that they were to obtain knowledge in no other way than by consulting God. Now this was the sole object of the Gentiles when they inquired of their magicians and sorcerers, to seek from heaven that knowledge of which they perceived themselves to be destitute. Thus they undoubtedly confessed themselves to be overwhelmed with darkness, and that the light of understanding was the special gift of God. Whence also came the name of divination, because they were persuaded that secret things were not within the compass of human apprehension, but that this knowledge must come from divine inspiration. But since by his machinations the devil perverts what is right in itself, these principles implanted in us, as I have said, by nature, have been corrupted by two errors, for both an immoderate desire of knowing more than is lawful has crept into our minds, and then we have had recourse to illicit means of knowledge. From these sources, viz., foolish curiosity and unrestrained temerity or audacity, all the superstitions and errors have flowed whereby the world has been assailed. Therefore does God, by forbidding magical arts, introduce a remedy for these two diseases, which arts were perversely invented that they might search out and bring to light things which He had chosen to conceal. For the best rule of knowledge is sobriety, that it may suffice us to know as much as is expedient for us. The lust of men has carried them deeper, so that they have desired to penetrate into all the most profound secrets. But the second error on which I have touched is much worse, that they should have sought by improper means to discover hidden things. We shall soon see that God also has foretold things to come by His servants; but no further than He knew to be profitable, and only with this object, to make it manifest that He exercises special care for His church. But since men's curiosity is insatiable, they do not consider what is useful for them, but, like Adam, desire to "be as gods," and to know all things

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without exception. When God indulges not these improper desires, they address themselves to the devil, the father of lies, still, however, as I have stated, under the false disguise of God's name. This is the origin of all the vanities whereby the world has ever been entangled. I now descend to particulars.

10. *There shall not be found among you.* This horrible and altogether monstrous infatuation, whereby the Gentiles had been possessed, afterwards invaded the Jews also, that they should immolate and even burn their children in honour of the gods to which they had devoted themselves; although it is probable that the greater part of them were not inflamed by such an excess of madness, but satisfied their superstition more easily, by merely making their children to pass through the fire. This was with them a kind of lustration to purge away all filthiness. But their cruel zeal impelled many of them even to murder, so as not even to spare their own flesh and blood. Yet in this they pleaded the example of Abraham, as if there were any similarity between the obedience of that holy man who, led by God's command, was ready to slay his son Isaac, and this barbarous act of violence in people who, though God prohibited and gainsaid, murdered their children. Yet in this horrible spectacle we perceive how much more fervently men engage in impious rites which their own temerity has dictated, than in efforts to worship God aright, when He openly and expressly enjoins them the thing that is good. This, indeed, ought to be the first care of parents to consecrate their children to God; but the only rite of initiation for the Jews was circumcision, and with this they should have been content. Moses then enumerates the various kinds of divination to which the heathen nations were addicted, in order to satisfy their foolish desire to know more than was lawful. I do not, however, disapprove of the view which some prefer,[1] that the

[1] In observing that some choose to say that Moses first uses a general term for all soothsayers, and then proceeding to describe particular classes of them, *C.* is following *S. M.'s* note on קסם קסמים; where the latter has said, "Alii putant esse generale vocabulum ad omnium divinationum species." The verb seems to be so used in 1 Samuel xxviii. 8, where *A. V.* renders it *divine.*—*W.*

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generic term is first used, and the various species are then subjoined. I shall explain these briefly, and not waste time in refuting particular opinions, although it is evident that even some of the rabbins are grossly mistaken about them. The word מעונן,[1] *magnonen*, I willingly admit to be derived from (a word signifying) *clouds;* and therefore it may properly mean *augurs*, or judicial astrologers. There are some who are rather of opinion that its root is מעון, *magnon*, which in Hebrew means *a place;* and this etymology would not badly suit the fanatics who divine all things from the position of the stars, and assign their stations both to the planets and the signs of the zodiac for their respective aspects. At any rate this is fully agreed, that auguries, as well as frivolous observations of the stars, are here condemned, when men, in their preposterous curiosity, suppose all events and circumstances to be under the dominion of the stars. The word which follows מנחש,[2] *menachesh*, means a *diviner* or *soothsayer*, (*ariolum,*) which sufficiently appears from Genesis xliv. 5, where Joseph pretends that he divined by his cup, because it was commonly believed that he possessed the art of soothsaying; and hence the name has been given to serpents on account of their subtlety. Some interpret the word מכשף,[3] *mekasheph*, a *juggler*, (*præstigiatorem,*) one who dazzles and deceives the eyes by optical illusions. Next follows the fifth[4] term, which I have translated "*tying knots,*" (*colligans colligationes,*) whereby some understand enchanters, who by magic arts gather together serpents into one place.

[1] The next term, מעונן, *S. M.* has explained as derived from ענן, a cloud, or its radical verb. Some have chosen to regard it rather as derived from עון, to watch; but *C.* must have learnt from some other source that there are critics who derive it from מעון, a place of habitation.—*W.*

[2] מנחש. That this term here means some kind of diviner is certain; but the root is used in an inoffensive sense for *making diligent search;* and the best critics are now generally agreed that it ought to have been so understood and rendered in Genesis xliv. 5, where *S. M.* has acknowledged (in his note on the present passage) that it is used for *sciscitari rem occultam*, notwithstanding his having there rendered it *auguratur.*—*W.*

[3] מכשף. The explanation here given is from *S. M.*—*W.*

[4] חבר חבר. The root signifies to join, or combine. How it came to mean *enchanting*, which it does in Syriac and Arabic, as well as in Hebrew, remains disputable. The explanation disliked by *C.* he had found in *S. M.;* that which follows is his own.—*W.*

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But this, in my judgment, is a poor explanation, and I, therefore, rather agree with those who conceive the calling together of evil spirits to be alluded to. But since it may be correctly translated "collecting, or gathering an assembly," I do not altogether reject the opinion of others, that it relates to those imaginary assemblies, to which unhappy men, whom the devil has bewitched, fancy themselves to be transported to feast and dance together, and to join in wicked conspiracies, and which are commonly called "synagogues." In the sixth word there is no ambiguity, whereby the people are forbidden to consult a spirit of Python; for thus may we properly render the Hebrew אוב,[1] *ob*, as St. Luke, a faithful and competent interpreter, has done, when he relates that a spirit of Python was cast out of the damsel at the command of Paul, (Acts xvi. 16;) and sometimes the Scripture calls these by the name of אובות, *oboth*, who allure evil spirits to give replies, of which deception a remarkable example is given in sacred history, (1 Sam. xxviii. 7,) in the case of the witch (*Pythonissa*) who shewed Saul Samuel, although dead. The Greeks have translated the word Python, because the delusions of Apollo Pythius were particularly famous. The seventh class (Ang., wizards) is ידעני,[2] *yadgnoni*, which may correctly be translated gnostics, or knowers; for I make no doubt that they adopted this honourable name for purposes of deceit, which is by no means an uncommon practice with impostors. Thus the Genethliacs, and others like them, vaunted themselves to be mathematicians. This is the craft of Satan to steal the respectable names of virtues and good

[1] שאל אוב. *S. M.*, Consulens pythonem. By saying that the Greeks have rendered אוב, Pythonem, *C.* would naturally lead his readers to suppose that the LXX. had done so, whereas, both in the Pentateuch and in 1 Samuel xxviii., where the Hebrew has *an interrogator of* אוב, the LXX. has ἐγγαστρίμυθος, a ventriloquist. The word אוב is allowed to mean properly a water-bottle, and its gurgling sound; and, from this last, a ventriloquist. It is obvious that Luke cannot be correctly spoken of as translating a Hebrew phrase when he was relating in Greek what the Greeks said of a person possessed by an evil spirit.— *W.*

[2] ידעני, from ידע, he knew. This word had previously been used by Moses in Leviticus xx. 27, where *S. M.* has said the Jews affirm that there were conjurers who put between their teeth the mouth of a certain animal called ידוע, and speak wonderful things through it. They add a wonderful fable, &c. The LXX. has ἐγγάστριμυθος, an enchanter, in Leviticus, and its equivalent here.— *W.*

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things, and to make them a covering for his lies, as, for instance, he gave the name of wise men to the Chaldean and Egyptian impostors; and thus, since the Prophets are called seers, he set against them the vain prognostications of false prophets, to astonish the minds of the simple. [1]For to derive, as some do, this word from a certain bird, is too childish a conjecture; and I wonder that in such a plain matter they have been led so utterly astray, whilst they waste their acuteness upon nothing. Finally, necromancy[2] is condemned, *i.e.*, the deceitful and delusive science of prophesying upon the answers of the dead, which some improperly restrict to those who sleep among tombs, in order to hear in their sleep the dead speaking, because foolish men have in many ways endeavoured to obtain communications from the dead. But, let us learn from this passage, with how many monstrous and ridiculous fascinations Satan, whenever God loosens the chain by which he is bound, is able to bewitch unhappy men; and how great power to deceive the father of lies obtains from the just vengeance of God, for the purpose of blinding unbelievers. As to the notion which some conceited persons entertain, that all these things are fabulous and absurd, it arises from inconsideration and presumption, because they do not reflect how severe a judgment is merited by those who wilfully extinguish the light and enwrap themselves in darkness. For God's truth is too precious to Him, for Him to suffer it to be rejected with impunity. Certainly it would be an impudent blasphemy to deny that magical arts were ever practised, since thus would God be accused of inadvertency, as though He had legislated[3] respecting things which did not exist. The objection that is made of its being absurd thus too highly to extol the power of Satan, as if he had the control of prophecies, which God claims for Himself

[1] Omitted in *Fr.* "The Hebrews describe him thus, that 'he put into his mouth a bone of a certain bird called Jaduaugh, and burned incense, and did other works, until he fell down as with shame, (or, modestie,) and spake with his mouth things that were to come to pass.'—*Maim. Treat. of Idolatry*, ch. vi., sect. 2." *Ainsworth in loco.*

[2] דרש אל־המתים, one who seeks to the dead, (compare last clause of Isaiah viii. 19;) a necromancer.

[3] "Fait des loix frivoles et superflues;" passed frivolous and superfluous laws.—*Fr.*

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alone, and as if he could cause the living to converse with the dead and change the forms of things, admits of an easy solution. With respect to vaticinations, there is no necessity for a subtle discussion as to how Satan can foreknow secret things, (on which point, as it seems to me, Augustine troubled himself too anxiously,) for this is a labour of supererogation, if we recollect that by God's just judgment a certain kind of vaticination is permitted to the devils, in order more and more to deceive unbelievers, as will be more fully treated of elsewhere. Meanwhile, we know that unbelievers were mocked with[1] ambiguous responses by all the oracles of false gods, and at length discovered from the event that they had been beguiled by deadly artifices; and, therefore, in Isaiah, (xli. 23,) God justly charges every idol with ignorance of futurity. Yet this does not prevent Satan from revealing certain hidden matters, by the prediction of which he may ensnare, as by a bait, the reprobate. I admit, indeed, that in progress of time the Roman augurs abandoned the study of their art, and abused the credulity of the lower orders by nothing but gross fictions; but if in former times Satan had not led even the most sharp-sighted into error by this artifice, Xenophon,[2] the disciple of Socrates, would not have so often mentioned among the chief praises of Cyrus,[3] that he was devoted to augury, and had learnt to be so from his father. Finally, the experience of all ages teaches us that men of depraved curiosity have often received from Satan, by means of magicians, a knowledge of things which could not have been obtained naturally. As to the actual operations of Satan, whether he raises the dead, or bewitches men and beasts, or invests any substances with new forms through enchantment, we must consider that whatever miracles he appears to work are mere delusions; and, since he is the father of darkness, it is clear he has no power except upon unbe-

[1] "Par circuits et responses à deux ententes;" by circuitous and ambiguous answers.—*Fr.*

[2] Homme de jugement.—*Fr.*

[3] See, for example, at the end of the 1st Book of the Cyropædia, the advice of Cyaxares: Μάθε δὲ μου, ὦ παῖ, καὶ τάδε, ἔφη, τὰ μίγιστα· Παρὰ γὰρ ἱερὰ, καὶ οἰωνοὺς μήτ' ἐν σαυτῷ μηδέποτε μηδὲν ἐν σῇ στρατιᾷ κινδυνεύσῃς, κατανοῶν ὡς ἄνθρωποι μὲν αἰρεῖνται πράξεις εἰκάζοντες, εἰδότες δὲ οὐδὲν ἀπὸ ποίας ἴσαι αὐτοῖς τἀγαθόν· κ.τ.λ.

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lievers, whose minds are darkened, so as not to distinguish black from white. Yet we have already seen how Pharaoh's magicians rivalled Moses in their miracles. Wherefore we need not wonder if, by God's permission, he should disturb the elements, or afflict the reprobate with diseases and other evils, or present phantoms to their sight. On this account we should more earnestly implore of God to restrain from us an enemy armed against us with so many destructive arts.

12. *For all that do these things are an abomination.* First, he would have the authority of God act as a rein to guide them; and then sets before them that vengeance which they were soon about to see inflicted upon the heathen, nay, of which they were themselves to be the executioners and ministers. For since it could not be a matter of the slightest doubt, but that the inhabitants of the land of Canaan were rooted out from their peaceful habitations only by God's hand, he assigns as the cause of this destruction that they had polluted themselves and their country by these blasphemous and abominable superstitions. By this striking example, then, he deters them from imitating the sins which facts themselves shewed to be thus severely punished. Thus Paul admonishes believers to seek diligently to avoid the sins which provoke God's wrath against the disobedient. (Eph. v. 6.)

13. *Thou shalt be perfect.* He refers to the mutual obligation of that holy covenant whereby as on the one side He had pledged Himself to the Jews, so on the other He had made them His debtors, not to prostitute themselves to idols, or to hanker after strange religions, whereby men's minds are led astray. This *perfectness*, then, is opposed to all those mixtures or corruptions which withdraw us from the sincere worship of the one true God; because the simplicity which retains us in obedience to heavenly teaching, is that spiritual chastity which God requires in His Church. The context of the passage proves this with sufficient clearness, viz., that God would restrain the Jews from all licentiousness, so that being devoted to His service, they should not look this way or that way, nor be carried away by vanity

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and instability, but constantly abide in the pure worship which He had prescribed to them. For this reason Paul declares that he is jealous for Christ; and because he had "espoused" the Corinthians to Christ, he feared "lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve, through his subtlety," so being ensnared by the wiles of impostors, they should fall "from the simplicity that is in Christ." (2 Cor. xi. 2.)

14. *For these nations.* As God had just before been setting before them the punishment He was about to inflict upon these nations, in order to alarm and warn them, so now does he admonish them that the inheritance was handed over to them on this condition, that they should be mindful of so great a benefit, and beware of all pollutions; and that they succeeded the former inhabitants of the land, with a view to their being separate from them; for whence was this change, except that God might acquire to Himself a new people, and purify the land from all its defilements? Although He only mentions two classes of superstitions, yet thus, by *synecdoche*, He indicates them all. The sum is, that they should not be like the nations in vices and corruptions, which had been the cause of their destruction; since God had not only exterminated the men themselves, but their abominable rites also. Some divide the latter part of the verse into two clauses, "but thou shalt not do so;" and then, "Jehovah gives you the land," which last word they supply. But I do not hesitate to think that the pronoun אתה, *athah*, must be thus rendered, "But as for thee;" and then I think it must be read continuously, "God hath not suffered thee to do so," for the word נתן, *nathan*, is of extensive signification. The tendency of the whole is, that the prohibition of God should be of more weight with them than the example of the nations.

15. The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken;

15. Prophetam e medio tui, ex fratribus tuis, sicut me, suscitabit tibi Jehova Deus tuus: illum audietis.

16. According to all that thou desiredst of the Lord thy God in Horeb, in the day of the assembly,

16. Secundum omnia quæ petisti a Jehova Deo tuo in Horeb, in die conventus, dicendo, Non adjiciam

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saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not.

17. And the Lord said unto me, They have well *spoken that* which they have spoken.

18. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.

audire vocem Jehovæ Dei mei, et ignem hunc magnum non videbo amplius, ne moriar.

17. Et dixit Jehovah ad me, Bene egerunt in eo quod loquuti sunt.

18. Prophetam suscitabo illis e medio fratrum suorum sicut te, ponamque verba mea in ore ejus: loqueturque ad eos quæcunque ei mandavero.

15. *The Lord thy God will raise up.* This is added by anticipation, lest the Israelites should object that they were more hardly dealt with than the rest of the nations of the world; for it was always most justly considered an extraordinary blessing to hold communication with God; and indeed there can be nothing more to be desired. But an opinion had obtained currency, that men approached more closely to God by means of magical arts, by the oracles of Pythonic spirits, and by the study of augury. The people of Israel, then, would have complained of being badly treated, if they had been shut out from all prophecies and revelations. Moses meets this complaint or objection by announcing, that their access to God would be not less familiar than as if He should Himself openly come down from heaven; if only they kept the right way, and were contented with that rule which He deemed best for them. He, therefore, commands that, instead of all the imaginations of the Gentiles, the doctrine of the Prophets should alone have force among them. Thus He signifies that although God should not openly come down from heaven, yet that His will, as far as was expedient, should be surely and clearly made known to them, since He would faithfully teach them by His servants the Prophets. On this ground when, in Isaiah, He has mocked at the prophecies of false gods, He calls the Israelites His "witnesses," (Isaiah xliii. 1-10,) as having made them the depositaries of His secrets and of the treasures of divine wisdom. We see, then, the way pointed out in which God would have His people inquire concerning the things necessary to salvation; and this is more plainly declared in Isaiah viii. 19, 20, "And

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when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead? To the law and to the testimony." Nor is there any doubt that Isaiah took this doctrine from the passage before us, when he first condemns the errors which men by their curiosity invent for themselves, and then enjoins the faithful simply to give attention to the Law, and to be content with this form of instruction, unless they desired to be miserably misled. Hence we conclude that the expression, "a Prophet," is used by *enallage* for a number of Prophets. For it is altogether absurd, as some do, to restrict it to Joshua or Jeremiah; since Moses is here treating of the continual manner of the Church's government, and is not speaking of what God would do within a short time. Not at all more correct is their opinion, who apply it strictly to Christ alone; for it is well to bear in mind what I have said respecting God's intention, viz., that no excuse should be left for the Jews, if they turned aside to familiar spirits (*Pythones*) or magicians, since God would never leave them without Prophets and teachers. But if He had referred them to Christ alone, the objection would naturally arise that it was hard for them to have neither Prophets nor revelations for two thousand years. Nor is there any strength in those two arguments on which some insist, that the Prophet, of whom Moses bears witness, must be more excellent than him who proclaimed him; and that the eulogium that he should be "like unto" Moses could not be applied to the ancient Prophets, since it is said elsewhere that "there arose not a Prophet since like unto" him. (Deut. xxxiv. 10.) For he does not at all detract from his own dignity, by recommending that whosoever might be sent by God should be hearkened to, whether they were his equals or his inferiors; and, as to the comparison, this particle translated *like* (*sicut*) does not always denote equality. Therefore it is true that there was no Prophet like Moses, that is to say, similar to him in every respect, or in whom so many gifts were displayed; yet it is no less true, that they were all like Moses; because God set over His Church a continual succession of teachers, to exe-

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cute the same office as he did. This is referred to in the words, " For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John," (Matt. xi. 13, and Luke xvi. 16,) where we see others united as colleagues with Moses in the government of the Church, until the coming of Christ. Yet Peter aptly and elegantly accommodates this testimony to Christ, (Acts iii. 22,) not to the exclusion of others of God's servants, but in order to warn the Jews that in rejecting Christ they are at the same time refusing this inestimable benefit of God; for the gift of prophecy had so flourished among His ancient people, and teachers had so been constantly appointed to succeed each other, that nevertheless there should be some interruption before the coming of Christ. Hence, in that sad dispersion which followed the return from the Babylonish captivity, the faithful complain in Psalm lxxiv. 9, " We see not our signs; there is no more any prophet." On this account Malachi exhorts the people to remember the Law given in Horeb; and immediately after adds, " Behold I send you Elijah the prophet," &c., (Mal. iv. 4, 5;) as much as to say, that the time was at hand in which a more perfect doctrine should be manifested, and a fuller light should shine. For the Apostle says truly, that " God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son," (Heb. i. 1, 2;) and, in fact, by the appearing of the doctrine of the Gospel, the course of the prophetic doctrine was completed; because God thus fully exhibited what was promised by the latter. And this was so generally understood that even the Samaritan woman said that Messias was coming, who would tell all things. (John iv. 25.) To this, then, what I have lately quoted as to the transition from the Law and the Prophets to the Gospel refers; and hence it is made out, that this passage was most appropriately expounded by Peter as relating to Christ; for unless the Jews chose to accuse God of falsehood, it was incumbent upon them to look to Christ, at whose hand was promised both the confirmation of doctrine and the restoration of all things. They had been for a long time destitute of Prophets, of whom Moses had testified that they should never be want-

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ing to them, and whom he had promised as the[1] lawful ministers for retaining the people in allegiance, so that they should not turn aside to superstitions; they had, therefore, either no religion, or else that greatest of Teachers was to be expected, who in his own person (*unus*) would present the perfection of the prophetic office. But we must remark the peculiar circumstances whereby God restrains the evil affections of the Jews. It was no common act of His indulgence, that He should take to himself Prophets from among that people, so that they should have no need to run about to a distance in search of revelations, and at the same time that they might be taught familiarly according to their capacity. But with regard to the comparison which Moses makes between himself and other prophets, its effect is to raise their teaching in men's estimation. They had been long accustomed to this mode of instruction, viz., to hear God speaking to them by the mouth of a man; and the authority of Moses was so fully established, that they were firmly persuaded that they were under the divine government, and that all things necessary to salvation were revealed to them.

16. *According to all that thou desiredst.* He pronounces them to be guilty of ingratitude if they did not quietly submit themselves to their Prophets, since on this point God had complied with their own request. For in order that the prophetic office might be more reverenced and beloved by them, and lest it should fall into disrepute through their beholding the Prophet to be but a mortal, God had extracted the confession from them that nothing could be better than that He should make choice of human interpreters. At the promulgation of the Law, the visible majesty of God had shone forth, and the people, terrified at the sight, had voluntarily desired that Moses should be given to them as a teacher, and as the proclaimer of the heavenly voice. We have already seen how useful was this terror to recommend the teaching which is delivered by the mouth of man. We have abundant experience that our minds are often carried away by vain speculations. Thus we should

[1] Ordinaires.—*Fr.*

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wish to bring down God from heaven as often as any doubt creeps into them. It was necessary, therefore, that the Israelites should be convinced of their weakness, lest they should go beyond their due bounds, and that they might be led to ask for that as a great blessing which God had foreseen to be for their good, and at the same time might abandon that proud curiosity which would always have been exciting them, had it not been corrected betimes by the application of this remedy. But it would have been anything but excusable in them to have grown weary of that gift which they had judged to be so good for themselves. The sum is, that God had appeared once to obtain credit and authority for His Prophets; but that He had established that order for the government of His Church, and for the declaration of His will, which the people themselves had known by experience to be most highly advantageous to themselves.

17. *They have well spoken.* Moses relates how this desire of the people was approved by the judgment and the voice of God. Not as if whatever the foolish caprice of men may have urged them absurdly to ask, ought therefore to be immediately granted; but when God's consent and, so to speak, His vote coincides with it, then whatever He shews to be pleasing to Him ought to stand firm and inviolable. Hence it follows that God, in sending the Prophets, provided for the salvation of men as was most expedient. Moreover, He asserts that when pious teachers arise, who faithfully shew the way of salvation, it is an extraordinary proof of His favour, and He takes to Himself the praise when He repeats it again,[1] "I will raise them up a Prophet." (Deut.

[1] *S. M.* says, in his note on this verse, "Some of the Hebrews understand by that Prophet, Joshua, who succeeded Moses as ruler; others think Jeremiah must be meant, who rebuked the people in the same terms as Moses had done. But Christians who devoutly assert that this passage speaks of Christ, confute the Jews by referring to what is said in the last chap. of Deut.,—'There arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses,' &c. This passage must be prophetic of some other remarkable Prophet who should not be inferior to Moses, especially as the text says, *like thee*, 'that as thou didst deliver the people from corporal bondage, so shall the prophet whom I will raise up for them deliver them from the bondage of sin.'"—*W.*

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xviii. 18.) Thus also Paul teaches,—"And how shall they preach except they be sent?" (Rom. x. 15.) The same Apostle, too, bears witness that none will be found sufficient for this office, and that the power of teaching aright is received from God. (2 Cor. ii. 14, and iv. 1.) Hence it follows that God, by a certain evidence of His presence, declares His favour towards us as often as He enlightens with the gifts of His Spirit, and raises up faithful and true teachers. Moses afterwards reminds them that God so governs His Church by the hands and the operation of men as not to derogate from Himself; for He retains this as His attribute, to suggest to the mouth, as it were, of His Prophets what they are to say; neither does He permit them to say or advance more than He has commanded. We perceive, then, that pastors were from the first appointed, not that they should themselves rule, or subject the Church to their imaginations, but only to be the organs of the Holy Spirit. And those who in these days usurp a greater power, ought to be altogether deposed from their sacrilegious despotism.

DEUTERONOMY, CHAPTER XIII.

1. If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder,

2. And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them:

3. Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul.

4. Ye shall walk after the Lord your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him.

1. Quum surrexerit in medio tui propheta, vel qui somnium somniabit, et dederit tibi signum vel portentum.

2. Eveneritque tibi signum et portentum quod dixerat tibi, dicendo, Eamus post deos alienos quos non nosti, et colamus eos.

3. Non obedies verbis prophetæ illius, aut somnium somniantis: quia tentat vos Jehova Deus vester, ut sciat an diligatis Jehovam Deum vestrum toto corde vestro, et tota anima vestra.

4. Post Jehovam Deum vestrum ambulabitis, illumque timebitis, ac præcepta ejus custodietis: voci ejus obedietis, et eum coletis, eique adhærebitis.

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DEUT. xviii. 21. And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken?

22. When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that *is* the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, *but* the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him.

21. Quia si dixeris in corde tuo, Quomodo cognoscemus verbum quod non loquutus fuerit Jehova?

22. Quando loquetur propheta in nomine Jehovæ, et non extiterit res illa, neque evenerit: sermo est quem non loquutus est Jehova, per superbiam enim loquutus est propheta ille: ne timeas ab eo.

After having restrained the Israelites from the strange delusions of the Gentiles, Moses now forbids them from being too credulous if false teachers should arise from among themselves, and warns them diligently to beware of all novel inventions, and not to turn aside in the very least degree from the Law, at the instigation of any one. For there is peril to be apprehended, not only from professed and manifest enemies, or from foreign superstitions, but Satan plots also by means of intestine deceits, and abuses the holy name of God in order to betray us. Therefore it behoves that the faith of the godly should not only be externally fortified and protected by the ramparts of the word, lest corruption should creep in from without, but also that it should be garrisoned within by the same word, lest novel imaginations should secretly insinuate themselves and destroy the purity of doctrine. Moreover, we gather from this prohibition that there is such certainty in the divine doctrines as to prevent our faith from being undermined or shaken, provided it has put forth into them living roots, and is firmly grounded upon them. For it would be vain for God to warn us against giving admission to false teachers, unless He, at the same time, shewed the means by which they were to be guarded against. And assuredly nothing can be more improbable than that religion should be ambiguous; and since the rule and definition of it is faithfully prescribed and set forth in the Law, justly does God require of His people that they should not waver, but constantly persist in the truth delivered to them. For truly does Isaiah declare respecting the Law, that in it it has not been said in vain to the seed of Jacob, that they should seek God's face.[1] (Isaiah xlv. 19.)

[1] See note on Deut. xxx. 11, *ante*.

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But, in seeking God, it would not be sufficient to teach what is right, unless men's minds are established in it; it is requisite, therefore, that religion should be sure and firm, or it will not be duly ordered. Nor is there any doubt that what Paul witnesses of the Gospel was true also of the Law, viz., that it armed its disciples against all the storms of temptation, that they "should be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men," &c. (Eph. iv. 14.) But the words before us, when examined more closely and regularly, will shew, with greater clearness, the sum of the matter.

DEUT. XIII. 1. *If there arise among you.* We already perceive that the question is not respecting the falsities and errors which Satan had spread throughout the world, but respecting those which were to appear in the very bosom of the Church, as if it had been said that the Law was not only given in order to separate the Israelites from heathen nations, but to keep themselves in the purity and integrity of the faith; for just as now-a-days Christ betroths the Church to Himself by the preachers of the Gospel, (2 Cor. xi. 2,) that she may devote herself as a chaste virgin to His obedience, and not allow herself to be withdrawn from the simplicity of the faith by any seductions; so of old God espoused His ancient people to Himself, and bade them close their ears against impostors, who are, as it were, the seducers of Satan tempting them to violate that sacred and special bond of marriage whereby God would be united with His people. We shall speedily see wherefore God would have His Church exposed to this evil. Meanwhile it is useful to admonish believers of their danger, that they may be constantly watching against the snares of Satan; for this abomination did not only prevail in that particular age, but it will have its evil influence even to the end of the world. We must remember what Peter says, that "as there were false prophets among" the Jews of old, so also in the kingdom of Christ "there shall be false teachers who privily shall bring in damnable heresies." (2 Pet. ii. 1.) Moses, however, does not merely speak of domestic enemies, but of such as shall

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assume the title of Prophets in order that they may deceive with greater license and impunity. From hence we infer that it is not enough to have an honourable position, or a plausible name, whether pastor, or prophet, or priest, unless it be allied to sincerity in accordance with our calling; for who are the persons whom God here commands to be avoided and held in abomination? Just those who boasted themselves to be Prophets, but who, when carefully inquired into, were obliged to drop their mask, and driven to confusion. A particular appellation is subjoined to their general one, since the same individual is spoken of as "a dreamer of dreams," because God of old time manifested Himself to the Prophets sometimes in visions and sometimes in dreams. Either of these, then, was an honourable pretext for conciliating favour. But the temptation which follows was still more dangerous, viz., if such an one should have commended himself by a successful prediction; for who would despise a prophecy authenticated by events, especially when Isaiah declares this to be the attribute of God alone? (Isaiah xlv. 21.) And the difficulty here is still increased, because in chap. xviii., God appears to distinguish false Prophets from true ones by this very test.[1] Thus I resolve the difficulty, God's claiming to Himself the glory of foretelling events does not prevent Him from occasionally conferring even on the ministers of Satan the power of prophecy respecting some particular point. Balaam was worse than any hireling crier, wishing as he did to frustrate the eternal decrees of God, and yet we know that his tongue was directed by the divine inspiration of the Spirit so as to be the proclaimer of that grace which he had been hired to quench. There is, therefore, no inconsistency in this, that a man should be a perfidious impostor, and still endowed at the same time with a particular gift of prophecy, not so as always to deliver true revelations, (as, for instance, Caiaphas, who prophesied correctly once, was not always veracious,) but in so far as by God's permission it shall be given him

[1] Addition in *Fr.*, "disant, Que si le cas n'advient, le Prophete s'est ingere par presomption;" saying, that if the thing does not come to pass, the Prophet has meddled with it presumptuously.

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to foreknow this or that, so that one example of truth-telling may be the cloak for many falsehoods. Fitly, then, and properly, in the other passage, does God, by Moses, reprove the vanity of those rash spirits who promise what is not fulfilled. For we must take into consideration His intention. Many are there who bring themselves into notice by clandestine acts, and at length boldly burst forth and boast themselves to be prophets, whilst the people are in doubt whether they ought so to consider them. But since it most frequently happens that the folly of such men is betrayed by marks of infamy and disgrace inflicted upon them from above, so that the world may see that they have spoken falsely, justly does God declare that the event of their predictions is to be regarded, lest the Israelites should promiscuously and unreflectingly receive whatever they may hear. The principle, therefore, is established, that those speak in God's name who predict what really comes to pass; for they could not declare the truth respecting things unknown to man unless God Himself should dictate it to them. This is the tendency of the answer of Jeremiah to Hananiah,—"The prophets that have been before me and before thee of old, prophesied both against many countries, and against great kingdoms, of war, and of evil, and of pestilence. The prophet which prophesieth of peace, when the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, that the Lord hath truly sent him." (Jer. xxviii. 8, 9.) Hananiah promised that the war should end prosperously; but Jeremiah, knowing that he lied, brings him to an experimental proof of his falsehood, in case the facts should not correspond with what he had said. Thus far there is no inconsistency in our statement, that all true prophesies must proceed from God, and yet that the same Prophet who has predicted the truth may, in other points, be a deceiver. And especially let us remark the admonition of Paul, that "because they (the reprobate) receive not the love of the truth, that they may be saved; for this cause God sends them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (2 Thess. ii. 10-12.)

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Hence we are taught that not only are the reins of Satan loosed in order that he may do injury, but that he is armed with power effectively to drag on the reprobate to final destruction. Moses here teaches the same thing, for there are no reasonable grounds for the differences between Hebrew commentators as to the word *sign*.[1] It is unquestionable that signs were sometimes used in order to obtain credit for prophesies, as when Isaiah walked naked, (Isaiah xx. 2,) and Jeremiah wore a yoke on his neck, (Jer. xxviii. 10;) it is also unquestionable that Satan often deceives by magical incantations; but I have no doubt that by the words signifying *the sign and the wonder*, Moses here means anything incredible and unexpected, for the purpose of vaticination. The Hebrews use the word מופתים, *mophethim*, to express miracles whereby God portends anything future, as if He spoke from heaven. The word אות, *oth*, is more general, and is sometimes used for a banner, or a watchword, or signal, (*symbolum.*) Both are here put for extraordinary signs which testify the power of God, as if it were present; in this sense, Christ warns His disciples to beware of signs and lying prodigies. (Mat. xxiv. 11.) But although Satan dazzles the eyes with his illusions, so as in his false rivalry to win to himself the glory of God, yet have we shewn from St. Paul, and Moses has before declared, that impostors in their working of miracles are the ministers of God's vengeance, in order that the reprobate may be taken in their snares. Should any object that signs would be useless, which may be as well dangerous deceptions as confirmations of the truth, I reply, that such license has never been accorded to the devil, as that the light of God should not in the end shine forth from the midst of the darkness. It will happen, therefore, that the true power of God may be obscured for a time, (as we have seen before in the history of the magicians,) but that it will never be overwhelmed. Thus in the

[1] *C.* found in *S. M.'s* note on this verse that some of them understood the word *signs* to refer to such a sign as Jeremiah was to exhibit, (Jer. xxvii. 2,) the like to which was done by the false Prophet Zedekiah, (1 Kings xxii. 12;) whilst others thought that the text spoke of what magicians might do by their art, as Moses had witnessed in Pharaoh's presence. —*W.*

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miracles, whereby the Law was ratified, the glory of God so shone forth that they might obtain credit without any hesitation from the godly. Such, without controversy, are the miracles which authenticate the Gospel, because they present evidences inscribed upon them by God by which all suspicion of deceit is fully removed. And, indeed, since men's minds are involved in dull stupidity, and are blind even to the ordinary course of God's dealings, so also they are almost always mistaken with respect to miracles, unless His word enlightens them to dispel the darkness. In order, therefore, that we may duly profit by signs, an inseparable connection must be established between them and doctrine; and Moses rightly teaches that they must be repudiated who shall endeavour to pervert piety under the pretext of signs, because they impiously and wickedly divide things which God has joined together, and improperly divert to a contrary use the signs which only serve as aids to righteous doctrine. But after the religion of the Jews had been sealed by sure and evident signs, it was wrong for them to attend to accidental signs, and not altogether without base ingratitude. We now arrive at the sum of this passage, viz., that they must persevere in the worship of the one God, so that not even prodigies should have any force to shake the people's minds. The clause, therefore, "which thou hast not known," must be observed; whereby Moses signifies that the glory of the God which they serve was so certainly testified that their levity in turning this way or that would be inexcusable; and thus the knowledge which ought to be firmly implanted in their hearts, and to abide therein, is opposed to all the artifices of the devil, which only affect unstable minds.

3. *For the Lord your God proveth you.* (Latin, *tentat vos.*) Whenever this word, which means *to tempt*, is applied to God, it is not used in a bad sense, for "to take by guile," or, "to lay snares of deceit to entrap the unwary," but only for "to prove or examine." Now, God proves men's hearts, not that He may learn what was before unknown, but to lay open what was before concealed. The expression, "to know," therefore, refers to experimental knowledge only.

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The explanation of Augustine is tame and involved,[1] "That He may know, *i.e.*, that He may cause you to know." But, since it is so very common for human feelings to be attributed to God, where is the use of twisting words, which signify no more than that God makes trial, so that what might have been otherwise doubtful, should be actually displayed? Thus God tempted Abraham, when in an important matter He made trial of his faith or obedience. (Gen. xxii. 1.) Nor is what I have lately touched upon, and which we often read of, at all contradictory to this, viz., that God uses the instrumentality of Satan and of wicked men, in order to tempt men; because we must take into consideration the object to which He directs these trials, whereby it will be manifest that His design is very different from the malice and wiles of Satan. The reason here given is worthy of remark, because it removes the difficulty by which weak minds might have been easily disturbed. For nothing is less probable than that Satan should insult God and involve heaven and hell in war, or that he should assume to himself with impunity an attribute of God. Lest, then, such a discussion should trouble and weary the good, or keep them in perplexity, Moses thus anticipates it, by reminding them, that God does not meanwhile lie idle or asleep, having abandoned the care of His Church;[2] but that He designedly brings the truly pious to the proof, in order to distinguish them from the hypocrites; and this takes place, when they constantly persevere in the true faith against the assaults of their temptations, and do not fall from their standing. The Apostle declares the same thing also with regard to heresies, that they must needs arise in the Church, "that they which are approved may be made manifest." (1 Cor. xi. 19.) Wherefore we must not be impatient, nor murmur against God, if He chooses that the firmness of our faith, which is

[1] Aug. *de Genesi*, lib. i. 34. "Sic dicetur etiam illud, 'Tentat vos Dominus Deus vester, ut sciat si diligitis eum;' non enim ut sciat ipse, quem nihil latet, sed ut scire nos faciat, quantum in ejus dilectione profecerimus, tentari nos permittit." See also *Tractatus* xliii. *in Johannem*, 5, 6.

[2] Addition in French, "quand les seducteurs brouillent tout;" when seducers confuse everything.

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more precious than silver or gold, should be tried in the fiery furnace; but it behoves us humbly to acquiesce in His justice and wisdom. If any should still object, that, since the weakness of mankind is only too notorious, God deals with them somewhat unkindly, when He subjects them to these dangerous temptations, an answer may be readily given. I acknowledge indeed that, since our carnal sense is tender, this may seem hard, and inconsistent with the fatherly kindness of God; for, surely, when a miracle presents itself before our eyes, it is difficult not to submit to it. But, since the temptation injures none but those whose impiety, which it lays bare, was already convicted and condemned, whilst the sincere worshippers of God are preserved free from injury, how unjust would it be to take away from God this liberty of plucking the mask from treachery and deceit? Whosoever loves God with a pure heart is armed with the invincible power of the Divine Spirit, that he should not be ensnared by falsehoods; God thus rewards true and not fictitious piety, so that whosoever are of a true heart, should be protected by his faithful guardianship, and never feel the deadly wound. Meanwhile, why should He not devote to just destruction those who wilfully desire to perish? Nor need we be surprised at what He elsewhere declares, that it is He who deceives false prophets,[1] that by them he may inflict just vengeance on the reprobate, who eagerly go in search of their destructive deceits. Since, then, all the good are sure to overcome, so that the wiles of Satan are to them nothing but the exercises of their virtue; why should God be blamed, because the malice of Satan and of the wicked prepares for them the grounds of their victory and triumph? Only let us cleave to this axiom, that all, who heartily love and reverence God, will always be sure and safe under the protection of God. It is true, I confess, that integrity of heart is a peculiar gift of God and the fruit of His secret election; but, since their own consciences reproach the reprobate with their contempt of God, their hypocrisy, pride, or depravity, the blame of the iniquity that dwells in them is unjustly laid upon God. This, then, is sufficient to refute

[1] I presume that there is an allusion here to Ezekiel xiv. 9.

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all carnal and perverse reasonings and blasphemies, viz., that whosoever are right in heart are guarded by the aid of the Spirit from the poisonous influence of Satan, and that no one perishes against his will. And thus we come to the conclusion, that all who, having once seemed to embrace the doctrines of salvation, afterwards reject and deny them, had never possessed anything more than the disguise of a false profession, because, if they sincerely loved God, they would remain firm in heart in the midst of all things tending to disturb them. It will indeed sometimes happen that the pious also will fall into errors, and will be seduced by the wicked; but it will only be in some respects and for a time; so that they never fall from the foundation, and presently recover themselves, (*resipiscant.*) And then, it must also be observed, they pay the penalty of their negligence, or instability, because they have not been sufficiently attentive to God's Word, or have not sufficiently devoted themselves to religious pursuits. Hence we further gather, that whilst many turn away professedly from the doctrines of religion, on the ground of their seeing so many contentions and disputes to distract them, it is a mere vain excuse to cover their profane neglect or hatred of God. It is true that there are great discrepancies of opinion, and very warm contentions; but whosoever in a teachable and gentle spirit shall seek after truth, and shall give himself over and submit himself as the disciple of God, he will never be without the spirit of judgment and discretion. But, since some listen disdainfully, some supremely despise it, some wish that God's Word were altogether destroyed, others think lightly of it, the saying of the Prophet holds good, "that that dieth, let it die;" (Zech. xi. 9;) and what Paul after him declares, "But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant." (1 Cor. xiv. 38.) Since it has always been the case that God's truth was never hidden from anybody, except him whose mind the God of this world has blinded. (2 Cor. iv. 4.) And this especially takes place[1] when light has shone from heaven, which suffers none to go astray but those who shut

[1] "Cela se verifie et demonstre principalement;" and this verifies and demonstrates itself principally.—*Fr.*

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their eyes. The remedy, therefore, is immediately subjoined, "Ye shall walk after the Lord your God;" as if Moses had said, it was sufficient for their preservation, that they had God to guide them in the right way, who had already prevented them by His gratuitous bounty. But, since numbers respond not to God's call, and regard Him not when He points out the way to them, the words "and fear him" are added; because "the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom." (Psalm cxi. 10.) Finally, Moses again inculcates that, if men are only resolved to obey God, they will be sufficiently taught by His voice what they ought to do. By the word "cleave," perseverance is denoted, and thus he indirectly reproves the instability of those who forsake and forget God, and go astray after empty imaginations.

DEUT. XVIII. 21. *And if thou say in thy heart.* This exception has reference to the prohibition, which we have already noticed in this same chapter. God, in His appointment of Prophets to be His substitutes in teaching the people, had invested them with no common authority, enjoining obedience to be paid to their precepts. But those, upon whom the office of teaching is conferred, do not always duly fulfil it; and hence the doubt naturally arises, how the people shall determine when they are addressed as by God's mouth, so as to distinguish the true from the false. There is, therefore, no question expressed in words, but God anticipates the secret scruples which might otherwise keep men's minds in suspense; for to "say in the heart" is equivalent to doubting in one's self when any danger is perceived. Now, to remove this difficulty, He does not enumerate all the marks of distinction; because He does not indeed allude to doctrine, but only to prophecies. But, speaking popularly, as to evil and ignorant persons, He commands them to observe whether those, who pretend to the name of Prophet, foretell the truth. But although, as we have lately seen, false teachers also rival in this respect the servants of God, and are found to be veracious in some particular prophecy; yet it is sufficient as the touchstone of their truth, to set down what happens for the most part, (ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ;) just as God himself chooses to be distinguished and sepa-

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rated from idols by the same test. Nor does Moses affirmatively pronounce that credit must be given to prophets, whenever events correspond with their predictions; but only admonishes them, that, if they consider attentively, they cannot be deceived, because God will speedily expose the false prophets to ridicule, and will confound their folly. Thus Jeremiah prudently accommodates this passage to the circumstances of his own times, in order that it may be manifested how rashly and falsely Hananiah spoke in promising impunity for those sins over which God's vengeance impended. (Jer. xxviii. 6.) In sum, Moses means nothing more than that the people would not be exposed to the danger of going astray, if they endeavoured heartily to obey God; because it would come to pass by His just judgment, that the temerity of all who have falsely abused His holy name should be made to appear, and thus they should be unmasked.

22. *The prophet hath spoken it presumptuously.* He not only condemns the folly and vanity of those who advance their own inventions in the place of God's commands, but also their arrogance; since doubtless, this is impious and intolerable audacity, to set forth the offspring of man's earthly brain as if it were a divine revelation. And on this ground it is that their impiety is detestable, who fill the air with the fumes of their revelations in order to alarm the simple. Wherefore, he adds, that they should "not be afraid" of such a prophet; because, as nothing can be more arrogant than the ministers of Satan, they confidently utter their boastings, by which we may be easily moved and even overwhelmed, unless we had this buckler to protect us, viz., that their terrific noise may be safely despised. This doctrine is now-a-days very useful for us. We know how insolently the Papists boast of the Catholic Church; of the Apostolic See; how fiercely they rage in Peter's name; how impetuously they fulminate their curses and anathemas; but, when it is ascertained that whatever they put forward as revelations of the Spirit are but the empty figments of men, it will be easy to dispel those terrors which flow from this same fountain of presumption.

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LEVITICUS, CHAPTER XVIII.

21. And thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass through *the fire* to Molech, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I *am* the Lord.

21. E semine tuo non dabis quod trajiciatur coram Moloch: neque profanabis nomen Dei tui: Ego Jehova.

LEV. xix. 26. Neither shall ye use enchantment, nor observe times.

26. Non augurabimini, neque divinationi eritis intenti.

31. Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them: I *am* the Lord your God.

31. Non respicietis post Pythones, et ariolos non inquiretis: ut polluamini in ipsis. Ego Jehova Deus vester.

DEUT. xii. 29. When the Lord thy God shall cut off the nations from before thee, whither thou goest to possess them, and thou succeedest them, and dwellest in their land;

29. Quum exciderit Jehova Deus tuus gentes ad quas tu venis possidendas a facie tua, et eas possederis, et habitaveris in terra ipsarum.

30. Take heed to thyself that thou be not snared by following them, after that they be destroyed from before thee; and that thou enquire not after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve their gods? even so will I do likewise.

30. Cave tibi ne te illaquees post ipsas, postquam deletæ fuerint a facie tua: et ne inquiras ad deos earum, dicendo, Quomodo servierunt gentes istæ diis suis, sic etiam ego faciam.

31. Thou shalt not do so unto the Lord thy God: for every abomination to the Lord which he hateth have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods.

31. Non facies sic Jehovæ Deo tuo: quia quicquid abominatio est Jehovæ, et quod odit, fecerunt diis suis: quinetiam filios suos et filias suas combusserunt igni diis suis.

32. What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it.

32. Omne igitur verbum quod ego præcipio vobis, observabitis ad faciendum: non adjicies super illud, neque minues quicquam ex eo.

LEVIT. XVIII. 21. *Thou shalt not let any of thy seed.* In these three precepts Moses more lightly touches on what we have lately seen set forth at greater length in Deuteronomy; for there he condemns impious offerings, as well as the responses of familiar spirits, magical arts, and enchantments. He now in the first place adverts to adulterous sacrifices, especially to that impure and detestable service of consecrating their children to Moloch, as they called him, the idol of the Gentiles; and then adds a prohibition, that they should give no heed to false revelations. But in these two passages of

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Leviticus he only enumerates two classes,[1] viz., to use auguries and divinations, and to seek responses from familiar spirits, and to consult magicians or enchanters; yet he includes all the others of which we have previously spoken. And, lest they should think the crime a light one, he says that all they are "defiled" who devote themselves to this kind of curiosity. The confirmation, which is added at the end of both clauses, has relation to the sum of the First Commandment; for when God declares Himself to be "Jehovah, and the God of Israel," he both claims the worship which is due to Him alone, and also condemns all the superstitions whereby pure religion is adulterated. There is also an *antithesis* implied, in which God contrasts Himself with all fictitious idols; and therefore the words may be thus paraphrased,—Since I am the eternal God, and separated from all others which the Gentiles foolishly make to themselves, and since I have chosen you to myself as my peculiar people, I would have you, as you ought to be, pure and separated from all defilements.

DEUT. XII. 29. *When the Lord thy God shall cut off.* This passage has some affinity to that in the eighteenth chapter of Deuteronomy, which we have already remarked on. For inasmuch as it was easy for the people to lapse into the imitation of the Gentiles, and to worship their false gods, under whose protection the inhabitants boasted their land to be, all inquiry respecting them is also strictly forbidden.[2] For this is the origin of idolatry, when the genuine simplicity of God's worship is known, that people begin to be dissatisfied with it, and curiously to inquire whether there is anything worthy of belief in the figments of men; for men's minds are soon attracted by the snares of novelty, so as to pollute, with various kinds of leaven, what has been delivered in God's word. Nor does he only withdraw and restrain them from the desire of inquiry, but expressly com-

[1] "Il en raconte seulement *quatre* espéces; mais il y comprend toutes celles que nous avons veüs par ci-devant;" he mentions only *four* sorts, but comprehends in them all those which we have before observed.—*Fr.*

[2] Addition in French, "de peur que de l'un ils ne vienent a l'autre;" for fear that they should pass from one to the other.

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mands them to "take heed to" themselves, or to keep themselves; because men are naturally disposed to this wanton curiosity, and take much delight in it. Therefore God encloses His people with barriers, which may keep them back from all hurtful desires; nay, He would have them so abominate the practice of superstitions, as to fly even from the infection of hearing of them. We must briefly observe respecting the words, which we have translated "to possess the nations," that Moses does not mean that they were to become their prey, so as to be their slaves by right of capture, but that he refers to the land. Therefore he says, "thou shalt possess them before thy face;" *i.e.*, when they are destroyed, the land will be vacant for you to possess it. In the *Hiphil* conjugation this word signifies to expel, as we have already seen; and to this meaning Moses perhaps makes allusion. The word[1] which I have translated "*illaqueare*," to snare, some interpreters render to *stumble*, and others to be *carried away*, which would be more agreeable to the construction, "lest you should be carried away after them;" yet I have been unwilling to depart from the generally received opinion, when the metaphor of "ensnaring" is very appropriate; as if he had said, that all the perversities of the Gentiles were so many nets or snares to entrap men, if they come too near them; for it presently follows, "after that they be destroyed," which some also thus render, "lest you should perish after them," as if He would awaken their fears by holding forth the example of their destruction.

31. *Thou shalt not do so.* From these words we may gather what it is not to make to one's self the gods of others, viz., to bid farewell to all the inventions of men, and to pay attention to this one thing—what God commands. For why does God desire to be worshipped by His elect people, otherwise than the nations were in the habit of serving their gods, except because there ought to be a notable distinction, so that religion may not be confused? And surely unless

[1] תנקש, 2. fut. pass. of נקש. The Chaldee paraphrast is cited by *S. M.* as explaining it by a word equivalent to *thou stumble*. It does not appear who has rendered it *be carried away*.—*W.*

Pol. Syn. gives "aberres," as the Syriac version, and "ne capiaris," as that of Malvenda.

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men cleave to God's word, so as resolutely to determine that nothing else is permitted to them except what is there taught, they will not only be vacillating, but they will receive indiscriminately whatever comes in their way. We must then hold fast to this, "Thou shalt not do so;" and our minds must be restrained by this curb, lest any superstition which may defile the service of God should insinuate or establish itself. He adds, that God not only repudiates these strange worships, but even abominates them; and in order to impress this the more, he adduces one form of superstition, in which its absurdity was unusually manifest; for it is a foul barbarity that innocent children should be burnt by their parents.

32. *What thing soever I command.* In this brief clause he teaches that no other service of God is lawful, except that of which He has testified His approval in His word, and that obedience is as it were the mother of piety; as if he had said that all modes of devotion are absurd and infected with superstition, which are not directed by this rule. Hence we gather, that in order to the keeping of the First Commandment, a knowledge of the true God is required, derived from His word, and mixed with faith. By forbidding the addition, or diminishing of anything, he plainly condemns as illegitimate whatever men invent of their own imagination; whence it follows that they, who in worshipping God are guided by any rule save that which He Himself has prescribed, make to themselves false gods; and, therefore, horrible vengeance is denounced by Him against those who are guilty of this temerity, through Isaiah, "Forasmuch as this people draw near me, &c., by the precept of men; therefore, behold I will proceed to do a marvellous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish," &c. (Isaiah xxix. 13, 14.) Now, since all the ceremonies of the Papal worship are a mass of superstitions, no wonder that all her chief rulers and ministers should be blinded with that stupidity wherewith God has threatened them.[1]

[1] Addition in French, "avoit menacé les anciens Sacrificateurs."

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The Ceremonial Supplements of the First Commandment.

The Institution of the Passover.

EXODUS, CHAPTER XII.

1. And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying,

2. This month *shall be* unto you the beginning of months: it *shall be* the first month of the year to you.

3. Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth *day* of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of *their* fathers, a lamb for an house.

4. And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take *it*, according to the number of the souls: every man, according to his eating, shall make your count for the lamb.

5. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take *it* out from the sheep, or from the goats.

6. And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.

7. And they shall take of the blood, and strike *it* on the two side-posts, and on the upper door-post of the houses wherein they shall eat it.

8. And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; *and* with bitter *herbs* they shall eat it.

1. Loquutus est Jehova ad Mosen et ad Aharon in terra Ægypti, dicendo.

2. Mensis iste principium vobis erit mensium, et primus idem vobis in mensibus anni.

3. Loquimini ad totum cœtum Israel, dicendo, Decima hujus mensis tollat sibi quisque agnum secundum domum patrum, agnum domatim.

4. Quod si minor fuerit familia quam pro agno, assumet ipse vicinum suum qui propinquior fuerit domus suæ, pro numero animarum, singuli ad mensuram cibi sui numerabitis pro agno.

5. Agnus erit vobis integer masculus anniculus, quem ex ovibus aut capris tolletis.

6. Et erit vobis in custodia usque ad decimam quartam diem hujus mensis: mactabitque eum omnis cœtus Israel inter vesperas.

7. Et tollent e sanguine, ponentque super duos postes, et in superliminari ad domus in quibus eum comedent.

8. Et comedent carnem in ipsa nocte assam igni, et azymos panes cum amaritudinibus comedent.

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9. Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast *with* fire; his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof.

10. And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire.

11. And thus shall ye eat it: *with* your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand: and ye shall eat it in haste; it *is* the Lord's passover.

12. For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I *am* the Lord.

13. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye *are:* and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy *you,* when I smite the land of Egypt.

14. And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the Lord throughout your generations: ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever.

15. Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread, from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel.

16. And in the first day *there shall be* an holy convocation, and in the seventh day there shall be an holy convocation to you; no manner of work shall be done in them, save *that* which every man must eat, that only may be done of you.

17. And ye shall observe *the feast of* unleavened bread; for in this self-same day have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt: therefore shall ye observe this day in your generations by an ordinance for ever.

18. In the first *month,* on the fourteenth day of the month at even,

9. Non comedetis ex eo crudum, vel coctione coctum in aquis, sed assum igni: caput ejus cum cruribus ejus, et cum intestinis ejus.

10. Nec residuum facietis quicquam ex eo usque mane: quod autem reliquum fuerit ex eo usque mane, comburetis.

11. Sic comedetis illum, lumbis vestris accincti, et calceamenta vestra in pedibus vestris, et baculus vester in manu vestra, et comedetis ipsum cum festinatione. Est Pesah Jehovæ.

12. Nam transibo per terram Ægypti nocte hac, et percutiam omnem primogenitum in terra Ægypti ab homine usque ad jumentum: et in cunctis diis Ægypti edam judicia: ego Jehova.

13. Et erit sanguis vobis in signum per domos in quibus vos fueritis: et videns sanguinem ipsum transiliam vos: nec erit in vobis plaga interitus quum percutiam terram Ægypti.

14. Et erit vobis dies iste in memoriam: et celebrabitis eum festum Jehovæ in generationes vestras, statuto æterno celebrabitis eum.

15. Septem diebus infermentata comedetis: prima die cessare facietis fermentum e domibus vestris.

16. Et in die primo, convocatio sancta, die quoque septimo convocatio sancta erit vobis: omne opus non fiet in eis, veruntamen quod comedetur ab omni anima, illud tantummodo fiet a vobis.

17. Observabitisque infermentata: quia hac ipsa die eduxi exercitus vestros e terra Ægypti: observabitis *inquam* diem istum in generationibus vestris statuto perpetuo.

18. In primo mense, decimo quarto die mensis, in vespera comedetis

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ye shall eat unleavened bread, until the one and twentieth day of the month at even.

19. Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses: for whosoever eateth that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he be a stranger, or born in the land.

20. Ye shall eat nothing leavened; in all your habitations shall ye eat unleavened bread.

infermentata usque ad diem vicesimum primum mensis in vespera.

19. Septem diebus fermentum non invenietur in domibus vestris.

20. Omne fermentum non comedetis: in omnibus habitaculis vestris comedetis infermentata.

1. *And the Lord spake.* Although the institution of the Passover in some degree appertains to the Fourth Commandment, where the Sabbath and Feast-days will be treated of; yet, in so far as it was a solemn symbol[1] of their redemption, whereby the people professed their obligation to God their deliverer, and in a manner devoted themselves to His dominion, I have not hesitated to insert it here as a supplement of the First Commandment. The observation of the day itself will again recur in its proper place; it will only be suitable to observe here, that God enjoined this ceremony in order that He might wholly bind the people under obligation to Himself alone, and that from it the Israelites might learn that they should never turn away from Him, by whose kindness and hand they were redeemed. For by these means He had purchased them to Himself as His peculiar people; and, therefore, whenever He reproves them for declining from His pure worship, He complains that they were forgetful of this great favour, the memory of which ought to have been sufficient to retain them. In effect, then, the celebration of the Passover taught the Israelites that it was not lawful for them to have regard to any other God besides their Redeemer; and also that it was just and right for them to consecrate themselves to His service, since He had restored them from death to life; and thus, as in a glass or picture, He represented to their eyes His grace; and desired that they should on every succeeding year recognise what they had formerly experienced, lest it should ever depart from their memory. First,

[1] Memorial.—*Fr.*

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let us define what the Passover (*Pascha*) is;[1] I use its trite and ordinary name. In its etymology there is no difficulty, except that the passage (*transitus*) of God, is equivalent to His leaping over, (*transilitio*) whereby it came to pass that the houses of the Israelites remained untouched; for Isaiah,[2] speaking of the second redemption, unquestionably alludes to this place, when he says, I will leap over Jerusalem. The reason, then, for this expression being used is, that God's vengeance passed over the Israelites, so as to leave them uninjured. With respect to the twofold mention by Moses of a passing-over, observe that the same word is not used in both places; but *Pesah*[3] refers to the chosen people, and *Abar* to the Egyptians; as if he had said, my vengeance shall pass through the midst of your enemies, and shall everywhere destroy them; but you I will pass over untouched. Since, then, God was willing to spare His Israel, He awakened the minds of the faithful to the hope of this salvation, by the interposition of a sign;[4] whilst He instituted a perpetual memorial of His grace, that the Passover might every year renew the recollection of their deliverance. For the first Passover was celebrated in the very presence of the thing itself, to be a pledge to strengthen their terrified minds; but the annual repetition was a sacrifice of thanksgiving, whereby their posterity might be reminded that they were God's rightful and peculiar dependents (*clientes*). Yet both the original institution and the perpetual law had a higher reference; for God did not once redeem His ancient people, that they might remain safely and quietly in the land, but He wished to bring them onward even to the inheritance of eternal life, wherefore the Passover was no less

[1] This paragraph not in French.

[2] Is. xxxi. 5. *C.'s* own translation of the words rendered in our *A. V.*, "passing over he will preserve it," *i.e.*, Jerusalem, is "transiliens servabit;" that of Bishop Lowth is "leaping forward, and rescuing her." In his note on the passage, he expresses the opinion that the action described by the word פסח, in this chapter, is the "springing forward" of Jehovah the protector, to defend his people from the destroying angel.

[3] פסח and עבר in verses 13 and 12. It is observable that *C.* now properly translates פסח, *transilire*, in his own comment; though, when commenting on it before, he had only used parts of the word transire, which expresses no more than עבר.—*W.*

[4] "Symbolum."—*Lat.* "Signe ou Sacrement."—*Fr.*

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than Circumcision a sign of spiritual grace; and so it has an analogy and resemblance to the Holy Supper, because it both contained the same promises, which Christ now seals to us in that, and also taught that God could only be propitiated towards His people by the expiation of blood. In sum, it was the sign of the future redemption as well as of that which was past. For this reason Paul writes, that "Christ our Passover is slain," (1 Cor. v. 7;) which would be unsuitable, if the ancients had only been reminded in it of their temporal benefit. Yet let us first establish this, that the observation of the Passover was commanded by God in the Law, that He might demand the gratitude of His people and devote to Himself those who were redeemed by His power and grace. I now descend to particulars. God commands the Israelites to begin the year with the month in which they had come out of Egypt, as if it had been the day of their birth, since that exodus was in fact a kind of new birth;[1] for, whereas they had been buried in Egypt, the liberty given them by God was the beginning of a new life and the rising of a new light. For though their adoption had gone before, yet, since in the mean time it had almost vanished from the hearts of many, it was necessary that they should be in a manner re-begotten, that they might begin to acknowledge more certainly that God was their Father. Wherefore He says in Hosea, "I am the Lord thy God from the land of Egypt, and thou shalt know no God but me," (Hosea xii. 9, and xiii. 4;) because He had then especially acquired them to Himself as His peculiar people; and He speaks even more clearly a little before, "when Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt." (Hosea xi. 1.) Now, although it was common to the race of Abraham with other nations to begin the year with the month of March; yet in this respect the reason for it was different, for it was only to the elect people that their resurrection was annually put before their eyes. But, up to that time, the Hebrews themselves had begun their year with the month of September, which is called in Chaldee *Tisri*,

[1] "Une façon de faire renaistre;" a means of bringing about the new birth of the Church.—*Fr.*

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and in which many suppose that the world was created; because immediately on its creation the earth produced ripe fruits, so that its fecundity was in perfection. And still there remains among the Jews a twofold manner of dating and counting their years; for, in all matters which relate to the common business of life, they retain the old and natural computation, so that the first month is the beginning of Autumn; but, in religious matters and festivals, they follow the injunctions of Moses; and this is the legal year, beginning nearly with our month of March,[1] yet not precisely, because we have not their ancient *embolisms;* for, since twelve circuits of the moon would not equal the sun's course, they were obliged to make an intercalation, lest, in progress of years, an absurd and enormous diversity should arise. Thence it happens that the month *Nisan,* in which they celebrated the Passover, begins among the Jews sometimes earlier, and sometimes later, according as the intercalation retards it.

3. *Speak ye unto all.* A question is asked on this passage, why, when one Lamb alone was offered in sacrifice for the reconciliation of the Church, and God was propitiated by the blood of one Christ alone, He should have commanded a lamb to be slain in every house, as if there were to be a special sacrifice for every one apart? The reply is easy; because, although all were protected from destruction by the same blood, and the general rite united them altogether into fellowship in the same expiation, yet still it was not unreasonable that, by that special application, so to speak, God would have every family separately reminded, so as to feel the grace more peculiarly conferred on itself. Thus now-a-days we have all the same baptism, whereby we are ingrafted in common into the body of Christ; yet His baptism is conferred on every individual, that they may more surely acknowledge that they are partakers in the adoption, and therefore members of the Church. God, then, in commanding them to slay a lamb in every house, did not wish to draw away the people to different grounds of hope, but only to shew them in a familiar way, that all houses were

[1] There is a considerable abbreviation of this passage in the French.

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under obligation to Him, and that not only the salvation of the whole people ought to be confessed to come from Him, but that His singular blessing ought to shine forth in every family. The cause of his desiring the neighbours to be added if the number of people in one house were not sufficient to eat the Passover, was that nothing might be left of it; and this amongst others appears to have been the chief reason why the whole lamb was to be consumed, viz., lest they should mix this sacred feast with their daily food, and also lest its dignity should be diminished by appearing in the form of tainted meat. Perhaps, too, God provided this, lest any superstition should creep in from the preservation of the remnants; and therefore commanded the very bones to be burnt.

5. *Your lamb shall be without blemish.* We shall see elsewhere, that in all their sacrifices prescribed by the Law they were diligently to beware, lest there should be any spot or fault in them; and by this the people were reminded, that the expiation was not legitimate, unless it possessed the utmost perfection, such as is never to be found in men. It is not to be wondered, therefore, that God should now require the Passover to be of one year old, and without blemish, that the Israelites might know that in order to propitiate God, a more excellent price was required than could be discovered in the whole human race; and since such excellency could much less exist in a beast, the celestial perfection and purity of Christ was shewn forth by this visible perfection of the lamb, or kid. It was with reference to this also that they were commanded to keep it up separate from the rest of the flock, from the tenth until the fourteenth day of the month. As to God's will, that the side-posts and lintel should be sprinkled with blood, by this sign He plainly taught them, that the sacrifice would profit none but those who were stained and marked with Christ's blood; for this sprinkling was equivalent to their bearing each one the mark of His blood upon their forehead. And, in effect, Christ, by the outpouring of His blood, has not delivered all, but only the faithful, who sanctify themselves with it. That internal sprinkling indeed holds the first place, which Peter teaches

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us to be effected by the power of the Spirit, (1 Pet. i. 2;) yet by this external sign the Israelites were instructed that they could not be protected from God's wrath, except by holding up against it the shield of the blood. And this corresponds with the lesson learnt above, that the same universal sacrifice was offered particularly in every house, in order that thus its peculiar instruction might affect them more seriously, when generally it would have been uninteresting and ineffectual. I prefer to be ignorant as to why He required the flesh to be roasted and not boiled, rather than to invent such unfounded subtleties, as that Christ was, in a manner, roasted on the Cross. A nearer approach to the truth appears to me to be, that God desired thus to mark their haste, because, when their implements were all packed up, the meat would be more easily roasted on a spit than cooked in the pot. And this also is the tendency of the precept respecting the manner of eating it, in which three things are to be observed, the unleavened bread, the sauce of bitter herbs, and the girded loins, together with the rest of the costume of travellers. Undoubtedly God commanded the bread to be made without leaven on account of their sudden departure, because He would snatch his people out of Egypt, as it were, in a moment; and, therefore, they baked unleavened loaves out of flour hurriedly kneaded.[1] It was required that the remembrance of this should be renewed every year, in order that their posterity might know that their deliverance was afforded them from above, since their fathers hastily took flight without having made any preparation for their journey; for any greater preparation would have thrown some shade upon the divine grace, which shone forth more brightly on account of their want of food. God would have them content with bitter herbs, because hasty travellers, and especially in an enemy's country, are satisfied without delicacies, and whatever sauce they meet with is very grateful to their taste, nor does its bitterness seem offensive to them, as it does in seasons of abundance and ease. Possibly too they were reminded of their former condition; for under so dire

[1] "N'ayant pas loisir d'avoir du pain ordinaire;" not having time to make ordinary bread.—*Fr.*

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and bitter a tyranny nothing could be sweet or pleasant. But their haste was still more plainly represented by their eating the lamb hurriedly with their shoes on their feet, and their loins girded, and leaning on their staves. Men pass from their suppers to bed and to repose; and therefore the ancients used both to take off their shoes and to lie down to it; but the people's necessity inverts this order, since they were compelled to fly immediately from their supper. And hence the reason is subjoined, "it is the Lord's passover;" since they escaped in safety amidst the confusion, and when the sword of God was raging. We must, however, bear in mind what we have already said, that the use of this sacrament was twofold, both to exercise the people in the recollection of their past deliverance, and to nourish in them the hope of future redemption; and therefore the passover not only reminded them of what God had already done for His people, but also of what they were hereafter to expect from Him. Consequently there is no doubt that the Israelites ought to have learnt from this rite that they were redeemed from the tyranny of Egypt on these terms, viz., that a much more excellent salvation still awaited them. But this spiritual mystery was more clearly laid open by the coming of Christ; and therefore Paul, accommodating this ancient figure to us, commands us, because "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us," to "keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice, and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." (1 Cor. v. 7, 8.) God therefore formerly wished the houses, in which the Passover was celebrated, to be free from all corruption; and far more does it become us now to take care of this, lest the sacrifice wherewith Christ has redeemed us from eternal death, should be polluted by any leaven of wickedness. To the same effect[1] is what follows, warning us lest we should be devoted to the attractions of the world, and lest our course should be delayed by the enticements of pleasure; but that we are pilgrims on earth, and should be

[1] "Nous avons aussi à prendre instruction touchant les herbes ameres, et equipages des voyageurs," &c.; we must also receive instruction from the bitter herbs, and their equipment as travellers.—*Fr.*

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ever girt and ready to make haste; and that although the cross of Christ be bitter, yet we should not refuse to taste it.

12. *For I will pass through the land.* This refers to the first passover, the night in which they were to be delivered from Egypt; and God expressly declares that He will be the judge against the false gods, because it then especially appeared how utterly unable they were to help, and how vain and fallacious was their service. The absurd commentary of some of the Rabbins[1] is tame and far-fetched, that the idols should be cast down, because by the single miracle of their redemption, all superstitions were magnificently overturned, and whatsoever men believed about idols was condemned as folly and delusion. God therefore affirms, that he would not only conquer the nation itself, but its very gods. Perhaps Isaiah alludes to this passage when he says, "Behold, the Lord rideth upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt; and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence," (Is. xix. 1;) for wherever He has appeared as the Saviour of His people, He has asserted His glory in opposition to all impious and corrupt religions.

14. *And this day shall be unto you.* This is spoken of its annual celebration, which was as well a monument of their exodus as a symbol of their future deliverance. As to its being called a rite, or ordinance for ever, (*edictum sæculi,*) I admit that by this expression perpetuity is meant, but only such as would exist until the renovation of the Church; and the same explanation will apply to circumcision, as well as to the whole ceremonial of the Law; for although by Christ's coming it was abolished as concerns its use, yet did it only then attain its true solidity; and therefore the difference between ourselves and the ancient people detracts nothing from this perpetual statute; just in the same way as the new Covenant does not destroy the old in substance, but only in form. A little further on, where he says, "save that which every man must eat, that only may be done of you," verse 18; the meaning is, that they must cease from every work, except the preparation of their day's food; and this excep-

[1] *C.* found in *S. M.* that Onkelos and the Rabbis said the Egyptian idols were laid prostrate.—*W.*

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tion is expressly made, that they may not permit themselves to violate their sacred festivals by other business.

24. And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons for ever.

25. And it shall come to pass, when ye be come to the land which the Lord will give you, according as he hath promised, that ye shall keep this service.

26. And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service?

27. That ye shall say, It *is* the sacrifice of the Lord's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head, and worshipped.

43. And the Lord said unto Moses and Aaron, This *is* the ordinance of the passover; There shall no stranger eat thereof:

44. But every man's servant that is bought for money, when thou hast circumcised him, then shall he eat thereof.

45. A foreigner and an hired servant shall not eat thereof.

46. In one house shall it be eaten: thou shalt not carry forth ought of the flesh abroad out of the house; neither shall ye break a bone thereof.

47. All the congregation of Israel shall keep it.

48. And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to the Lord, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land: for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof.

49. One law shall be to him that is home-born, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you.

24. Observabitis itaque rem istam, (*vel* verbum istud,) in statutum tibi et filiis tuis usque in sæculum.

25. Et erit quum intraveritis terram quam dabit Jehova vobis, ut pollicitus est, tunc observabitis hunc cultum.

26. Erit autem quum dixerint vobis filii vestri, Quis est cultus iste vobis?

27. Tunc dicetis, Est sacrificium Pesah Jehovæ, qui transiliit domos filiorum Israel in Ægypto quando percussit Ægyptios, et domos nostras eruit.

43. Et dixit Jehova ad Mosen et Aharon, Statutum Pesah: Nullus alienigena comedet ex eo.

44. Sed omnis servus viri pecunia emptus, postquam ipsum circunciderit, comedet ex eo.

45. Advena et mercenarius non comedet ex eo.

46. In eadem domo comedetur: non efferes extra domum foras e carne, et os non confringetis ex eo.

47. Universus cœtus Israel facient ipsum, (*vel*, mactabunt.)

48. Quod si inquilinus apud te peregrinetur, ut faciat Pesah Jehovæ, circuncidetur ei omnis masculus, et tunc accedat ad faciendum illud, eritque sicut indigena terræ; nullus autem incircuncisus vescatur ex eo.

49. Lex una erit indigenæ et peregrino, qui peregrinatur in medio vestri.

24. *And ye shall observe this thing.* He again repeats the precept as to its annual celebration, and expressly says,

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that, when they have come into the land, the recollection of their deliverance is yearly to be revived by this rite. He adds, however, what he had not before touched upon, that they should also teach their children, since, without the aid of this teaching, it would have been an unmeaning and useless spectacle. For doctrine may justly be called the life of sacraments, without which no vigour remains in them, so far are they from imparting to us any life. Lest, then, the passover should be a lifeless ceremony, God in this place enjoins that it shall not be mute; for in these words, "when your children shall say unto you," Moses does not mean that they are to wait until their children make inquiry of their own accord, and anticipate the zeal of their parents; but he only indicates the age when they are capable of being taught. Yet, at the same time, he indirectly exhorts the children to teachableness, when their age admits of their understanding what the passover signifies, and enjoins them diligently to inquire into the use of the ceremony; that thus religion may be handed down, and may ever flourish amongst the people. Since, then, the Paschal Lamb corresponds with the Holy Supper, we may gather from hence, that none can be duly admitted to receive it, but those who are capable of being taught.

43. *This is the ordinance of the passover.* Since the passover was the sacred bond whereby God would hold the elect people in obligation to Himself, He forbids all strangers from partaking of it; because a promiscuous permission to eat of it would have been an unworthy profanation. And in fact, since this is a supplement to the First Commandment, it only addresses itself to those unto whom is directed the preface of the Law, "Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord." We know that among the Gentiles none but the initiated[1] were admitted to their sacred rites. This was an absurd imitation[2] of this true and lawful ordinance;

[1] "Ceux qui y estoyent sollennellement introduits, et comme emmatriculez;" those who had been solemnly introduced to them, and as it were, matriculated.—*Fr.*

[2] "Vray est que cela n'a este qu'une singerie: mais tant y a que le diable a voulu contrefaire ce qui est du vray ordre et legitime, lequel doit estre observé en tous sacremens, c'est puis qu'ils sont tesmoinages de la

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because such a condition is only applicable to the institution of God, lest strangers should promiscuously usurp the testimonies of His grace, with which He honours His Church alone. For circumcision was then like a hedge, which should distinguish heathen nations from the holy race of Abraham; if, then, any should wish to celebrate the passover together with the elect people, it was necessary that he should be circumcised, so as to attach himself to the true God; though God did not merely refer to the outward sign, but to the object, viz., that all who were circumcised should promise to study sincere piety. Moses, therefore, first of all, excludes all strangers who were unclean through their uncircumcision; and then he adds two exceptions, viz., that servants bought with money should be circumcised, (which was a necessary requirement;) and that free and independent persons, if they chose to embrace the same alternative, should also be received to the passover. Hence it appears that this rite was not only peculiar to God's people, but that it was a sign of the future redemption. For strangers could not testify that they were sharers in that redemption which had been promised to the race of Abraham alone; and, therefore, the ceremony of the sacred feast would have been vain and useless to them. Nor does Moses refer only to that mixed multitude which had followed the Israelites out of Egypt; but prescribes a law respecting all strangers, who for many succeeding ages should come on business into the land. No doubt but that, in celebrating the passover, they would have expected another redemption; since that which was already vouchsafed to the children of Abraham had not extended to them. For although they might be reckoned among the people, yet did no portion of the land in consequence fall to their lot, nor was their condition improved as to temporal rights;[1] but it was only that they

grace speciale de Dieu envers son Eglise, qu'on ne les doit pas prostituer a tous venans;" it is true that this was but a monkey-like imitation; but, whilst the devil has thus wished to counterfeit the true and legitimate order, which should be preserved in all sacraments, it is because they are the testimonies of the special favour of God to His Church, that they must not be prostituted to all comers.—*Fr.*

[1] Omitted in the French.

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might become members of the Church. From the analogy between the Holy Supper and the Passover, this law remains in force now, viz., that no polluted or impure person should intrude himself at the Lord's table, but that only the faithful should be received, after they have professed themselves to be followers of Christ.[1] And this is expressed also in the words, "One law shall be to him that is homeborn, and unto the stranger," &c., ver. 49; viz., that the ordinance of the sacrament should be solemnly observed by all, and that thus they should equally participate in the grace offered to them in common, and that in this respect the condition of all should be equal, though it differed as to their inheritance of the land.

46. *Neither shall ye break a bone thereof.* I am not certain why God desired no bone to be broken; unless that this might also be a sign of haste; because people at table seldom partake of the marrow, unless when their entertainment is protracted. For I fear there is too much subtlety in the explanation which some give, that the virtue of Christ, which is represented by the bones, is not diminished whilst we feed on His flesh. But the former opinion which I have glanced at above, as it is the simplest, so also it is by no means unsuitable here; that they were commanded, when they were standing in readiness for their journey, and eating hurriedly, to burn the bones in order to prevent all delay. What God commanded as to the lamb, He chose to have openly fulfilled in the person of His only-begotten Son; that the truth corresponding with its type, and the substance with its shadow, might shew that God would be reconciled to His people by no other blood than Christ's. Whence it is again clear that the ancients under the Law were instructed by the Paschal Lamb as to the future redemption, for otherwise this passage could not have been properly accommodated to Christ. But when the Evangelist quotes it, (John xix. 33,) he takes it for granted that thus was typically shewn what God would bestow by His Son. Hence it came to pass that He was distinguished by this visible

[1] "Fait protestation de leur foy et Chrestienté;" made open profession of their faith and Christianity.—*Fr.*

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mark, which proved Him to be the true Passover. But, in order that no bone of Christ's should be broken, God's providence wonderfully interfered. The soldiers were commanded to hasten the death of Christ, no less than that of the robbers, by breaking their bones. They execute their intention on the robbers, but lest they should attempt the same on Christ, it is certain that they were restrained by a divine power, so that the wholeness of His bones might be a presage of the approaching redemption.

EXODUS, CHAPTER XIII.

3. And Moses said unto the people, Remember this day, in which ye came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand the Lord brought you out from this *place*: there shall no leavened bread be eaten.

3. Tunc dixit Moses ad populum, Memento diei hujus quo egressi estis ex Ægypto, e domo servorum: quia in fortitudine manus eduxit vos hinc Jehova: neque comedatur fermentatum.

4. This day came ye out, in the month Abib.

4. Hodie vos egredimini mense Abib.

5. And it shall be, when the Lord shall bring thee into the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, which he sware unto thy fathers to give thee, a land flowing with milk and honey, that thou shalt keep this service in this month.

5. Quum te introduxerit Jehova in terram Chananæi, Hittæi, Amorrhæi, et Hivæi, et Jebusæi, de qua juravit patribus tuis se daturum tibi, terram fluentem lacte et melle, tum coles cultum istum in mense isto.

6. Seven days thou shalt eat unleavened bread, and in the seventh day *shall be* a feast to the Lord.

6. Septem diebus comedes infermentata, die autem septimo solennitas erit Jehovæ.

7. Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days: and there shall no leavened bread be seen with thee; neither shall there be leaven seen with thee in all thy quarters.

7. Infermentata comedentur septem diebus: nec conspicietur apud te fermentatum, neque apparebit apud te fermentum in universo termino tuo.

8. And thou shalt shew thy son in that day, saying, *This is done* because of that *which* the Lord did unto me when I came forth out of Egypt.

8. Annuntiabisque filio tuo eo die, dicendo, Propter hoc quod fecit (*vel*, propterea quod hoc fecit) Jehova mihi quum exirem ex Ægypto.

9. And it shall be for a sign unto thee upon thine hand, and for a memorial between thine eyes, that the Lord's law may be in thy mouth: for with a strong hand hath the Lord brought thee out of Egypt.

9. Et erit tibi in signum super manum tuam, et in memoriale inter oculos tuos, ut sit lex Jehovæ in ore tuo, quia in manu forti eduxit te Jehova ex Egypto.

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10. Thou shalt therefore keep this ordinance in his season from year to year.

10. Observabisque statutum hoc in tempore suo quotannis.

3. *And Moses said unto the people.* He repeats what he had said more at length in the foregoing chapter, respecting the unleavened bread, not so much to instruct as to exhort them ; for he had already expressed the matter with so much clearness, that there was no need of further explanation ; but it was useful to stimulate them, that they might devote themselves with greater zeal to their duty, and especially lest, after a longer lapse of time, their ardour should, as usual, gradually abate. He therefore exhorts them, that after they came into the land, they should diligently observe what he had before commanded. And from the context here, it is plain that the two commands as to the sanctifying the first-born, and celebrating the passover, had the same object, viz., that their deliverance should retain the elect people in the special service of the true God.

4. *This day came ye out.* He compares the day of their coming out with the whole time of their sojourning in the land of Canaan ; as if he had said that they were redeemed not to enjoy a mere transient joy, but that they might be mindful of their blessing throughout all ages. He proceeds to eulogize the extent and the fertility of the land again, principally for two reasons. The first is, lest after such glorious victories pride should possess their minds, and in the abundance of their good things their eyes should be closed by fatness ; the second, that by the very multitude of their possessions they might be the more incited to the duty of gratitude, and to the service of God. For it might be that the conquerors of so many nations, and the lords of so rich and extensive a territory would wax wanton, so as to be less devoted to God's service, unless they had been reminded that they owed it to God alone that they had conquered so many peoples, and had obtained dominion over them. But Moses shews them that, in proportion to God's goodness to them, so would they be the more inexcusable, if they did not earnestly labour to testify heir gratitude. With this object he repeats the names of

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the nations, by the destruction of which they were to become inheritors of the land; and then adds, "a land flowing with milk and honey," in order to arouse them still more and more to piety by the great profusion of the blessings which would be ever before their eyes. Those are entirely mistaken who suppose that the month *Abib*[1] is the same as *Ab*, which corresponds with our July. For it is evident that the Israelites came out of Egypt in the month *Nisan*, about the vernal equinox; of which circumstance, the keeping of Easter, handed down by tradition from our forefathers, is an unquestionable proof. Now, since the Hebrews borrowed from the Chaldeans all the names of their months, which were in use two thousand years after, it would be absurd in this place to regard *Abib* as a proper name, especially when, in Scripture, we nowhere find the months designated by proper names. Since, then, reason demonstrates that this word is applied appellatively, we must inquire why it is applied to March or the beginning of April. Those who translate *Abib* "ripening fruits," have no ground for it, since the word simply means "anything which grows;" hence it is applied to the stalks of corn; and because in those warm climates the corn rises to its height about the vernal equinox, from this fact, *Nisan* is called the month of stalks. It is also a probable conjecture, (as we have already said,) that the beginning of the year was changed, in order that the nativity of the Church might receive more distinction; as if the world were then renewed. The opinion of

[1] אביב. *C.* has copied the Hebrew in his text, writing it Abib, as a proper name; but in the *V.* it is translated "mensis novarum frugum," and in *S.M.*, "mensis maturescentis frugis." The name for July is אָב, which exists in Chaldee as a general name for the fleshy fruit of trees. David Levi says, in his *Lingua Sacra*, that one of their Rabbis had observed that Ab or Av is not to be found in Scripture, and that all the names of the Jewish months, as Sivan, Nisan, &c., are not Hebrew but Chaldee; for which reason we do not meet with them but in the books of Zechariah, Daniel, Ezra, and Esther, which were written during the captivity; and in these four books mention is made of seven of the months, but in the Jerusalem Targum of Esther they all follow regularly. This is also the opinion of *Aben-Ezra*; but adds, "we find three of the months named in Hebrew, viz., Zif, in 1 Kings vi. 1; Bul, in same chapter, ver. 38, and Ethanim in viii. 2; which plainly shews that they had names for all the months in Hebrew; but during the captivity they adopted those of their masters."—*W.*

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some that Noah came out of the ark in the same month, so that the temperature of spring might receive him in his new birth, as well as the other animals, I leave undecided as I have done on Gen. viii. But if this opinion be accepted, there will be an anticipation (*prolepsis*) in the name of the months; and in this there will be an absurdity, because it was useful for the people to be accustomed to the rites of the Law. But I do not enter into controversy about uncertainties.

8. *And thou shalt shew thy son in that day.* He repeats what we have already remarked, viz., an injunction to parents to teach their children, that they may thus transmit the service of God to their descendants. In the preceding chapter it was said, "when your children shall say unto you," &c.; and now he more briefly commands that God's goodness should be proclaimed, although none should make inquiry respecting it; because parents ought to be voluntarily disposed to educate their children in the fear of God. He also repeats, as we have seen above, that the memory of their deliverance should be annually renewed lest it should ever fade away, since religion is easily neglected unless men are diligently exercised in its study. He uses a comparison when he says, "it shall be for a sign unto thee upon thine hand, and for a memorial between thine eyes;" as though it had been said that their redemption should be set before their eyes in the passover, just as the ring which is on the finger, or the ornament which is bound upon the forehead are constantly seen. For which purpose also he had before desired that the precepts of the Law should be inscribed both on the head, and on the hands, and fringes of their garments. The sum is, that in the passover a monument of God's grace should exist, so that it might never sink into oblivion; just as ornaments which appear on the forehead and on the fingers awaken the attention by their being constantly beheld. But, if any should rather be of opinion that Moses alludes to those who, conscious of their own faithlessness, contrive means to assist their memory,[1] I offer them no

[1] "Et pourtant font des neuds a leurs ceintures, ou quelque marque a leur bonnet;" and therefore make knots in their girdles, or some mark in their cap.—*Fr.*

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opposition; as if he had said that, since they were disposed to forgetfulness, they should use this remedy, to awaken themselves to gratitude. He will soon afterwards repeat the same injunction, in connection with the offering of the first-born. The following words, "that the Lord's Law may be in thy mouth," confirm the opinion that the passover has reference to the First Commandment. They intimate that it is not enough to perform the external rite, unless it be associated with its proper object, viz., that they should devote themselves to God and to His doctrine. He mentions the mouth, not because the main thing is, to speak or discourse of the Law, for if piety lay in the tongue, hypocrites would be the best worshippers of God; but he expressly requires that, when each one shall have privately applied himself to the study of the Law, they shall also mutually teach and exhort each other.

DEUTERONOMY, CHAPTER XVI.

3. Thou shalt eat no leavened bread with it: seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread therewith, *even* the bread of affliction; (for thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt in haste;) that thou mayest remember the day when thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt all the days of thy life.

3. Non comedas cum illo fermentatum: septem diebus comedes cum illo infermentata, panem afflictionis: quia festinanter egressus es e terra Ægypti: ut memineris diei quo egressus es e terra Ægypti, omnibus diebus vitæ tuæ.

4. And there shall be no leavened bread seen with thee in all thy coasts seven days; neither shall there *any thing* of the flesh, which thou sacrificedst the first day at even, remain all night until the morning.

4. Neque conspicietur apud te fermentum in omni termino tuo septem diebus: neque pernoctabit de carnibus quas sacrificabis in vespera die primo usque mane.

EXOD. xxiii. 18. Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leavened bread; neither shall the fat of my sacrifice remain until the morning.

18. Non immolabis cum fermento sanguinem victimæ meæ: neque pernoctabit adeps agni mei usque mane.

EXOD. xxxiv. 25. Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leaven; neither shall the sacrifice of the feast of the passover be left unto the morning.

25. Non immolabis cum fermento sanguinem sacrificii mei: neque pernoctabit usque mane sacrificium solennitatis Pesah.

DEUT. XVI. 3. *Thou shalt eat no leavened bread with it.*

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Because by this sign they were reminded of their having escaped in haste, as it were from the very flames; therefore does Moses so often enforce the prohibition of leaven. And here this reason for it is alleged, viz., that their recollection should be recalled to the affliction from which they were rescued; for they must needs have been involved in the greatest straits, when there was no time even for baking bread. Unleavened bread is therefore called "the bread of affliction," that the manner of their deliverance may the more enhance God's grace. He repeats what we have seen before, that none of the flesh of the Lamb should be reserved to the following day. In the former passage from the Book of Exodus, because Moses speaks generally, the command may at first sight be referred to the perpetual sacrifice; but the latter passage takes away all obscurity, by the express mention of the passover. We need not wonder that in one place the word "fat" is used for the whole carcase, or any part of the lamb, either by *synecdoche*, or that God might commend the superior sanctity of the fat, of which they were not permitted to eat, and which was burnt in all sacrifices.

NUMBERS, CHAPTER IX.

1. And the Lord spake unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the first month of the second year after they were come out of the land of Egypt, saying,

1. Loquutus est autem Jehova ad Mosen in deserto Sinai, anno secundo quo egressi sunt e terra Ægypti, mense primo, dicendo:

2. Let the children of Israel also keep the passover at his appointed season.

2. Facient filii Israel Pesah in tempore suo.

3. In the fourteenth day of this month, at even, ye shall keep it in his appointed season: according to all the rites of it, and according to all the ceremonies thereof, shall ye keep it.

3. Decimoquarto die mensis hujus inter duas vesperas facietis illud tempore suo: secundum omnes ritus suos, et juxta omnes ceremonias suas facietis illud.

4. And Moses spake unto the children of Israel, that they should keep the passover.

4. Alloquutus est itaque Moses filios Israel ut facerent Pesah.

5. And they kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the first month at even in the wilderness of Sinai: according to all that the Lord commanded Moses, so did the children of Israel.

5. Feceruntque Pesah in primo mense, decimoquarto die ejusdem inter duas vesperas in deserto Sinai: secundum omnia quæ præceperat Jehova Mosi, sic fecerunt filii Israel.

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6. And there were certain men, who were defiled by the dead body of a man, that they could not keep the passover on that day: and they came before Moses and before Aaron on that day.

7. And those men said unto him, We *are* defiled by the dead body of a man: wherefore are we kept back, that we may not offer an offering of the Lord in his appointed season among the children of Israel?

8. And Moses said unto them, Stand still, and I will hear what the Lord will command concerning you.

9. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

10. Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If any man of you, or of your posterity, shall be unclean by reason of a dead body, or *be* in a journey afar off, yet he shall keep the passover unto the Lord.

11. The fourteenth day of the second month at even they shall keep it, *and* eat it with unleavened bread and bitter *herbs*.

12. They shall leave none of it unto the morning, nor break any bone of it: according to all the ordinances of the passover they shall keep it.

13. But the man that *is* clean, and is not in a journey, and forbeareth to keep the passover, even the same soul shall be cut off from his people: because he brought not the offering of the Lord in his appointed season, that man shall bear his sin.

14. And if a stranger shall sojourn among you, and will keep the passover unto the Lord; according to the ordinance of the passover, and according to the manner thereof, so shall he do: ye shall have one ordinance, both for the stranger, and for him that was born in the land.

6. Fuerunt autem quidam immundi super anima hominis, qui non potuerunt facere Pesah die ipso: tunc accesserunt coram Mose et coram Aharon ipso die.

7. Dixeruntque homines illi ad eum, Nos immundi sumus super anima hominis, ut quid prohibemur ne offeramus oblationem Jehovæ tempore suo in medio filiorum Israel?

8. Et dixit ad eos Moses, State, et audiam quid præcipiat Jehova pro vobis.

9. Loquutus est autem Jehova ad Mosen, dicendo:

10. Alloquere filios Israel, dicendo, Quicunque fuerit immundus super anima, aut fuerit in via remota, ex vobis, vel ex generationibus vestris, faciet Pesah Jehovæ.

11. Mense secundo, decimoquarto die inter duas vesperas facient illud: cum infermentatis: et herbis amaris comedent illud.

12. Non relinquent *quicquam* ex eo usque mane, neque os confringent in eo: secundum omnes ritus Pesah facient illud.

13. Vir autem qui est mundus, aut in via non fuerit, et cessaverit facere Pesah, excidetur anima illa e populis suis, quia oblationem Jehovæ non obtulit tempore suo, peccatum suum portabit vir ille.

14. Si vero habitaverit apud vos peregrinus, et fecerit Pesah Jehovæ, juxta ritum Pesah, et juxta ceremonias ejus sic faciet: ritus unus erit vobis, tam peregrino quam indigenæ terræ.

1. *And the Lord spake unto Moses.* We may infer how great was the carelessness, nay, even the ingratitude of the people, from the fact that God recalls to their recollection the celebration of the passover, before a year had elapsed. For what would they do fifty years hence, if there was any danger

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of their falling into forgetfulness of it in so short a time? If they had been voluntarily assiduous in their duty, it would have been unnecessary to repeat what had been so severely enjoined even with threats. But now God, as the year came to a close, reminds them that the day approaches on which He had fixed the passover to be held; that the Israelites might more surely learn that this solemn sacrifice is of yearly recurrence, and thus that it was sinful to omit it. He then commands that all the ceremonies should be diligently observed, and that they should not corrupt the pure institution with any strange leaven. Finally, their obedience is praised, because they had neither added anything to, nor diminished anything from, God's command.

6. *And there were certain men.* A question is here introduced incidentally, viz., what must be done, if any sudden defilement should prevent any persons from celebrating the passover with the rest; since God would expunge from amongst His people whosoever should not observe this memorial of their redemption? Although the history is here touched upon, yet because the doctrine as to the just and pure observance of the passover is its main subject, nay, because this passage is a kind of supplement to the general command, I have thought it proper to connect them here. Moses says that certain men were found defiled over the soul of a man,[1] viz., either because they had touched a dead body, or had gone into a house of mourning, or had been present at the funeral of a dead man; for the Law accounted such to be polluted, as will be seen elsewhere. Hence arose a kind of discrepancy; because, whilst the unclean were not permitted to approach the sacred feast, it was sinful to neglect this exercise of religion. Even Moses confessed that he was perplexed as to this matter, since he sought for time to inquire of God. The extraordinary modesty of the Prophet here displays itself, in not daring to pronounce on a doubtful matter, although he was their lawgiver. But he thus more clearly shewed that he by no means gave the Law out of his own head, since he did not dare even to interpret

[1] "By occasion of the soul of a man."—*Douay Version.* "Ex funere."—*Dathe.*

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it, except after receiving a new command. God, therefore, by laying down a special exception, takes away the contradiction (ἀντινομίαν). For to those, whom just necessity excused, He assigns the second month, that they too might be partakers of the passover, though they might not change the day at their own option. By this privilege He not only relieves the unclean, but also those who might be at a distance[1] from the society of their fellows, concerning whom the same question might be raised. For it was not suitable that any one should eat the passover by himself; and even if a family were too small, the neighbours were called in, that the number might be sufficient to eat the whole lamb; and therefore, the traveller abroad, or even at home, if he was far from his friends, had need of some remedy to preserve him from punishment. Moreover, we must remember that this was not a concession to despisers, nor was profane carelessness encouraged by this indulgence; but it was only a provision for the necessity of those who had inadvertently contracted defilement, or who could not escape it, or who were unexpectedly delayed on their journey. For they are said to have complained of their own accord to Moses that, on account of their uncleanness, they were prevented from eating the paschal lamb; and hence we infer their pious solicitude. For such, then, another passover is permitted; that, in the second month, they might recover what they had lost without their fault. Meanwhile it is strictly enjoined on them that they should change nothing in the whole ceremony; and on this account, what we have already seen is again repeated, viz., that they should eat it with bitter herbs, that they should not break a bone of it, and the like. But, that the permission might not be extended too far, the penalty is again denounced, if any, except for these two causes, should have neglected to celebrate the passover. For we know how men, unless they are restrained, permit themselves too great license in searching out excuses. It is more clearly expressed here than before, that the paschal lamb was a victim;[2] for it is said in ver. 7, "wherefore are we kept back, that we may not offer an offering?" and in ver. 13, "because he

[1] Hors leurs maisons et pays.—*Fr.* [2] Sacrifice.—*Fr.*

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brought not the offering of the Lord." I call attention to this, because there are some who think that the paschal lamb was so slain as not to be the offering of a sacrifice; whereas Paul distinctly teaches that a victim was offered in it, and then the feast annexed to it; for such is the meaning of his words, "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast," &c. (1 Cor. v. 7, 8.) Whenever the word "soul"[1] is used for a dead body, I take it to be a tolerably common metaphor of the Hebrew language.

Another Supplement (to the First Commandment) respecting the Sanctifying of the First-born.

EXODUS, CHAPTER XIII.

1. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,
2. Sanctify unto me all the first-born, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, *both* of man and of beast: it *is* mine.

11. And it shall be, when the Lord shall bring thee into the land of the Canaanites, as he sware unto thee and to thy fathers, and shall give it thee,
12. That thou shalt set apart unto the Lord all that openeth the matrix, and every firstling that cometh of a beast which thou hast; the males *shall be* the Lord's.
13. And every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb; and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break his neck: and all the first-born of man among thy children shalt thou redeem.
14. And it shall be, when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What *is* this? that thou shalt say unto him, By strength of hand the Lord brought us out from Egypt, from the house of bondage:

1. Et loquutus est Jehova ad Mosen, dicendo:
2. Sanctifica mihi primogenitum: quicquid aperit vulvam in filiis Israel, tam in hominibus quam in jumentis, meum est.

11. Quumque introduxerit te Jehova in terram Chananæorum, quemadmodum juravit tibi et patribus tuis, et dederit eam tibi.

12. Tunc transferes omnem apertionem vulvæ ad Jehovam: omnem apertionem, emissionem (*vel*, fœtum, *vel*, primogenitum) jumenti quod tuum erit: mascula, Jehovæ erunt.
13. Omne autem primogenitum asini redimes hœdo: quod si non redemeris, cervicem franges ei: omne quoque primogenitum hominis in filiis tuis redimes.

14. Quum autem interrogaverit te filius tuus cras, dicendo, Quid hoc? Tum dices ad eum, in fortitudine manus eduxit nos Jehova ex Ægypto e domo servorum.

[1] "The soul is here put for the body; and that dead, as often otherwhere; see Levit. xix. 28, and Num. v. 2. Sometime the Scripture explaineth it, calling it a 'dead soul,' Num. vi. 6. The Chaldee, Greek, and Latin keep the Hebrew phrase."—*Ainsworth in loco.*

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15. And it came to pass, when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, that the Lord slew all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both the first-born of man, and the first-born of beast: therefore I sacrifice to the Lord all that openeth the matrix, being males; but all the first-born of my children I redeem.

16. And it shall be for a token upon thine hand, and for frontlets between thine eyes: for by strength of hand the Lord brought us forth out of Egypt.

15. Et fuit quum indurasset se Pharao quominus dimitteret nos, occidit Jehova omne primogenitum in terra Ægypti, a primogenito hominis usque ad primogenitum animalis: idcirco ego sacrifico Jehovæ omnem apertionem vulvæ sexus masculini, omne autem primogenitum filiorum meorum redimo.

16. Et erit in signum super manum tuam, et in frontalia inter oculos tuos: quia in fortitudine manus eduxit nos Dominus ex Ægypto.

EXOD. xxii. 29. The first-born of thy sons shalt thou give unto me.

30. Likewise shalt thou do with thine oxen, *and* with thy sheep: seven days it shall be with his dam; on the eighth day thou shalt give it me.

29. Primogenitum filiorum tuorum dabis mihi.

30. Sic facies de bove tuo, et de pecude tua: septem diebus erit cum matre sua, die autem octavo dabis eum mihi.

EXOD. xxxiv. 19. All that openeth the matrix *is* mine; and every firstling among thy cattle, *whether* ox or sheep, *that is male.*

20. But the firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb: and if thou redeem *him* not, then shalt thou break his neck. All the first-born of thy sons thou shalt redeem; and none shall appear before me empty.

19. Quicquid aperit vulvam, meum est, et omne pecus tuum quod memorabitur inter primogenita boum et ovium.

20. At primogenitum asini redimes ove: quod si non redemeris, tunc cervicem præcides illi: omne primogenitum filiorum redimes.

LEVIT. xxvii. 26. Only the firstling of the beasts, which should be the Lord's firstling, no man shall sanctify it: whether *it be* ox or sheep, it *is* the Lord's.

26. Veruntamen primogenitum quod jure primogenituræ debetur Jehovæ inter animalia, nemo consecrabit: sive bos, sive ovis, Jehovæ est.

DEUT. xv. 19. All the firstling males that come of thy herd, and of thy flock, thou shalt sanctify unto the Lord thy God: thou shalt do no work with the firstling of thy bullock, nor shear the firstling of thy sheep:

20. Thou shalt eat *it* before the Lord thy God year by year, in the place which the Lord shall choose, thou and thy household.

19. Omne primogenitum quod nascetur in armento, aut in grege tuo, masculum sanctificabis Jehovæ Deo tuo: non uteris opera primogeniti bovis tui, neque tondebis primogenita gregis tui.

20. Coram Jehova Deo tuo comedes eum annuatim in loco quem elegerit Jehova, tu et familia tua.

EXOD. XIII. 2. *Sanctify unto me all the first-born.* This

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also refers to the First Commandment, because God asserts His right over the first-born, lest the recollection of their redemption should ever be lost. For thus were the Israelites admonished that they must honour that God by whose grace they had escaped in safety from the common destruction of Egypt, and, moreover, that they were rescued by His special blessing, in order that they should consecrate themselves to God their Deliverer. For the offering which He here requires, was a mark of separation between them and the heathen nations. [1]The first-born is called the opening of the womb, because it is the beginning of generation. The expression, "among the children of Israel," when He is speaking of brutes, as well as of their own offspring and children, is meant to distinguish the wild beasts from the tame and domestic animals. But although He commands only the first-born of the race of Abraham to be offered to Him, still this must undoubtedly be extended to the sanctification of the whole people; for whilst He says, that the first-born were His, because they especially owed their preservation to His mercy, yet for the same reason He signifies that all were His own.

11. *And it shall be when the Lord shall bring thee.* He proceeds with what had been glanced at in the beginning of the chapter with respect to the consecration of the first-born, that in this way they should bear witness to the special blessing of God which preserved them when He destroyed the first-born of the Egyptians. But He commands the animals to[2] be brought to Him, in order that they should be slain in the tabernacle. It is a common figure of speech to say, that the faithful and their gifts were placed in God's sight when they entered the tabernacle. I conceive that they were ordered, in Exodus xxii. 30, to keep the first-born seven days, in order to prevent deceptions, because if the young had been earlier torn from the teats of their dams, and immediately delivered to the priests, the offering would have been useless. Yet I doubt not that the eighth day

[1] Omitted in *Fr.*

[2] Observe *A. V.*, "thou shalt set apart;" *margin*, "cause to pass over;" *Lat.*, "transferes."

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was chosen because it was the one prescribed for circumcision. An exception is added, that a price should be paid for an ass, the offering of which would have been unclean. With regard to their children, it was requisite that they should be redeemed, because they could not be offered in sacrifice, nor made priests.

EXOD. XXXIV. 19. *All that openeth the matrix is mine.* He here defines what the offering was to be, viz., that they should redeem their children as well as the unclean animals at a price; but that they should bring into the tabernacle whatsoever could be offered in sacrifice. But God would not have their own sons consecrated to Him, because He had chosen the tribe of Levi, as we shall see elsewhere; they were therefore to remain free and in their own power after a pecuniary compensation. In the same way, unclean animals might be applied to domestic purposes, viz., after God's price had been paid, since to Him they belonged, and He claimed them for Himself. But if any should not put so high a value on an ass or other unclean animal, the Law commanded that its neck should be broken; for otherwise it would have been sacrilege to reap profit from God's property, or, what is the same, to transfer to their private use what God had adjudged to Himself.

LEV. XXVII. 26. *Only the firstling of the beasts.* Here a caution is interposed, that none should offer what is already the property of God. For since men are so greatly given to ostentation, and therefore in testifying their piety *whitewash two walls,* as the saying is, *out of the same pot,* God provides against this sin by forbidding the first-born to be offered to Him, since that would be to present stolen goods to Him. The sum is, that they should not, by consecrating to God what is already due to Him, steal from Him in their fictitious liberality what is consecrated and not their own. Nor let us be surprised at this law, because this ambition is almost natural to us all, to desire to lay God under obligation by the empty appearance of liberality, and therefore to seek for various grounds of boasting of religious duties, which, after all, are nought. And, undoubtedly, if this restraint had not been put upon the Jews, they would have

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aimed at the reputation of double zeal by this deceitful oblation, nor would they have scrupled, under the pretext of offering, to deprive God of what was His own.

DEUT. XV. 19. *All the firstling males.* Another caution is added, that they should make no profit of the first-born; for they might have used the labour of the ox in plowing, or as a beast of burden; they might also have sheared the lambs, and have afterwards brought a deteriorated animal into the tabernacle. God commands, therefore, that what was due to Him should be honestly and absolutely paid. But, if good laws sprang from evil habits, it hence appears with what audacious greediness men have ever been led away to wicked gains, since it was necessary that they should be prohibited by an express edict from seeking to enrich themselves at God's expense. Wherefore, it is not to be wondered at that men are acute and sagacious in cheating each other, since they by no means hesitate to deceive God by wicked artifices.

Another Supplement respecting the Payment of Tribute.

EXODUS, CHAPTER XXX.

11. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

12. When thou takest the sum of the children of Israel, after their number, then shall they give every man a ransom for his soul unto the Lord, when thou numberest them; that there be no plague among them, when *thou* numberest them.

13. This they shall give, every one that passeth among them that are numbered, half a shekel after the shekel of the sanctuary: (a shekel *is* twenty gerahs:) an half shekel *shall be* the offering of the Lord.

15. The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less, than half a shekel, when *they* give an offering unto the Lord, to make an atonement for your souls.

16. And thou shalt take the atonement-money of the children of Israel, and shalt appoint it for the service of

11. Loquutus est Jehova ad Mosen, dicendo,

12. Subduces summam filiorum Israel, prout numerati fuerint inter eos: dabunt singuli redemptionem animæ suæ Jehovæ quum numeraveris eos, et non erit in eis plaga quum numeraveris eos.

13. Hoc dabunt quisque transiens inter numeratos, dimidium sicli secundum siclum sanctuarii. Viginti obolorum est siclus, dimidium sicli erit oblatio Jehovæ.

15. Dives non augebit, et pauper non diminuet ex dimidio sicli, dando oblationem Jehovæ ad expiandas animas vestras.

16. Accipiesque pecuniam expiationum a filiis Israel, et dabis eam in opus tabernaculi testimonii:

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the tabernacle of the congregation; that it may be a memorial unto the children of Israel before the Lord, to make an atonement for your souls.

eritque filiis Israel in memoriale coram Jehova, ad expiandas animas vestras.

12. *When thou takest the sum of the children of Israel.* The tribute which God here demands at the taking of the census, is very fitly annexed to the First Commandment; for God, in making them tributary to Himself, shews that they were under His jurisdiction and power; and because He had purchased them to Himself, He willed that this voluntary gift of acknowledgment should be paid to Him. Princes, in numbering their subjects, make an estimate of their power; but God, who needs not the aid and assistance of men, would have the Israelites testify, at least by some sign, that they live in subjection to Him by whom they were redeemed. Therefore, when David numbered the people, (2 Sam. xxiv. 2,) it was a kind of emancipation of them from their subjection to God; and hence this pride, or temerity, or ingratitude, was so severely punished. But because it was useful and right that the people should be numbered, it is permitted upon this condition, that by paying a *ransom* for every individual, they should acknowledge God as their sole King. The word is not badly rendered by some an *atonement* or *expiation*, because, whilst they confessed that they owed their life to God, He was appeased towards them on the score of this testimony of their gratitude. But it may be derived from a word meaning *to cover;* for when they voluntarily subjected themselves to God, and fled beneath the shelter of his wings, they were protected and secure under this *covering*. Therefore it is said below, that this gift was offered to God as "an atonement for their souls;" and this is expressed in other words, that there should "be no plague" or destruction among them, because their safety rested in God's protection alone, that they should not be exposed to any evils. And since they had been Pharaoh's servants, their freedom would have been unlawful unless God had authorized and maintained it. Wherefore it was just that they should ascribe their deliverance by a solemn rite to God, lest they should suffer the punishment of fugitive slaves. But He appointed the same sum for all, that

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every one, of whatever rank, from the least to the greatest, might know that they were altogether His. Nor need we wonder, that since this was a personal due, (as it is commonly phrased,) their condition was not taken into account, so that the rich should pay more than the poor, but that the same price should be paid for every soul. The shekel[1] of the sanctuary was equivalent to an Attic *tetradrachma*, which Budæus estimates at 14 sols French, or thereabouts; for the *didrachma* amounts to seven sols, and the common *drachma* to three and a half sols, *minus* a *denier Tournois*. This is the didrachma of which mention is made in Matt. xvii. 24; for when the Jews were conquered by the Romans, it is probable that, in order to make their yoke more galling, this right of tribute was transferred to their conquerors. For this divinely prescribed offering being the symbol of their freedom, exempted the Jews from all heathen dominion, as if free or only belonging to God. But since by their own rebellion they had shaken off God's yoke, He purposely suffered them to be despoiled of their right, in order to subject them to the tyranny of strangers. And this occurred just before Christ's coming, that this new and

[1] I am indebted to an anonymous writer in that useful little publication, "Notes and Queries," vol. v. p. 325, for the following note. Having given a translation almost identical with that in the text, he adds, "which is as much as to say, that the sickle (or shekel) equalled 14 solidi, less four deniers; or 13⅞ solidi. But owing to the rapid declension in the value of French coin after the tenth century, it is manifestly impossible to assign a value to these solidi, unless the precise date of their coinage were known. A writer may, of course, allude to coin indefinitely precedent to his own time. In the present case, however, we may, as a matter of curiosity, *analytically* approximate to a result in this way:—The drachma is now known to have contained about 65 grains of pure silver, consequently the tetradrachma contained 260 grains. The present franc contains about 70 grains of pure silver, and consequently the sol, or 20th part, is 3½ grains. This last multiplied by 13⅞ produces about 48 grains. But the weight of the tetradrachma is 260 grains; therefore the sol with which the comparison was made, must have contained upwards of fivefold its present value in pure silver. Now, according to the depreciation tables of M. Dennis, this condition obtained in 1483, under Charles VIII., at which time Budæus was actually living, having been born in 1467; but from other circumstances I am induced to believe that the solidus Gallicus mentioned by him was coined by Louis XII. in 1498, at which time the quantity of pure silver was fourfold and a half that of the present day." Dean Prideaux, *Connexion* i. 3, says, "Every Jew annually paid a half shekel, *i.e.*, about eighteenpence of our money."

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unwonted oppression might increase their longing for Him. But inasmuch as this tribute was paid by command of the Law, the Jews were reminded that they were a people consecrated to God.

Another Supplement as to the Vow of the Nazarites.[1]

NUMBERS, CHAPTER VI.

1. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,
2. Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When either man or woman shall separate *themselves* to vow a vow of a Nazarite, to separate *themselves* unto the Lord;
3. He shall separate *himself* from wine and strong drink, and shall drink no vinegar of wine, or vinegar of strong drink, neither shall he drink any liquor of grapes, nor eat moist grapes, or dried.
4. All the days of his separation shall he eat nothing that is made of the vine-tree, from the kernels even to the husk.
5. All the days of the vow of his separation there shall no razor come upon his head; until the days be fulfilled, in the which he separateth *himself* unto the Lord he shall be holy, *and* shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow.
6. All the days that he separateth *himself* unto the Lord he shall come at no dead body.
7. He shall not make himself unclean for his father, or for his mother, for his brother, or for his sister, when they die; because the consecration of his God *is* upon his head.
8. All the days of his separation he *is* holy unto the Lord.
9. And if any man die very suddenly by him, and he hath defiled the head of his consecration; then he shall shave his head in the day of his cleansing, on the seventh day shall he shave it.

1. Et loquutus est Jehova ad Mosen, dicendo,
2. Alloquere filios Israel, et dic eis, Vir aut mulier quum separaverit se vovendo votum Nazaræi, ad separandum se Jehovæ:
3. A vino et sicera separabit se, acetum vini, et acetum siceræ non bibet, neque ullum liquorem uvarum bibet, nec uvas recentes et siccas comedet.
4. Omnibus diebus separationis suæ, ex omni quod conficitur ex vite vinifera, ab acinis usque ad corticem, non comedet.
5. Omnibus diebus voti separationis suæ novacula non transibit super caput ejus, donec impleti fuerint dies quibus separabit se Jehovæ, sanctus erit, crescere sinet cæsariem capitis sui.
6. Omnibus diebus quibus separabit se Jehovæ, ad animam mortui non ingredietur.
7. Super patre suo aut super matre sua, super fratre suo aut super sorore sua, non polluet sese illis quum mortui fuerint: quia consecratio Dei sui est super caput ejus.
8. Omnibus diebus separationis suæ sanctus erit Jehovæ.
9. Si autem mortuus fuerit mortuus juxta eum statim mox, et polluerit caput separationis ejus: radet caput suum die purificationis suæ, die septimo radet illud.

[1] Heading from the French, "Autre dependence du Voeu des Nazariens."

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10. And on the eighth day he shall bring two turtles, or two young pigeons, to the priest, to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation;

11. And the priest shall offer the one for a sin-offering, and the other for a burnt-offering, and make an atonement for him, for that he sinned by the dead, and shall hallow his head that same day.

12. And he shall consecrate unto the Lord the days of his separation, and shall bring a lamb of the first year for a trespass-offering: but the days that were before shall be lost, because his separation was defiled.

13. And this *is* the law of the Nazarite: When the days of his separation are fulfilled, he shall be brought unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation;

14. And he shall offer his offering unto the Lord, one he-lamb of the first year without blemish for a burnt-offering, and one ewe-lamb of the first year without blemish for a sin-offering, and one ram without blemish for peace-offerings,

15. And a basket of unleavened bread, cakes of fine flour mingled with oil, and wafers of unleavened bread anointed with oil, and their meat-offering, and their drink-offerings.

16. And the priest shall bring *them* before the Lord, and shall offer his sin-offering, and his burnt-offering.

17. And he shall offer the ram *for* a sacrifice of peace-offerings unto the Lord, with the basket of unleavened bread: the priest shall offer also his meat-offering, and his drink-offering.

18. And the Nazarite shall shave the head of his separation *at* the door of the tabernacle of the congregation; and shall take the hair of the head of his separation, and put *it* in the fire which *is* under the sacrifice of the peace-offerings.

19. And the priest shall take the sodden shoulder of the ram, and one unleavened cake out of the basket,

10. Die autem octavo afferet duos turtures, vel duos pullos columbæ ad sacerdotem, ad ostium tabernaculi conventionis.

11. Et faciet sacerdos unum pro peccato, et alterum in holocaustum: expiabitque illum de eo quod peccavit super cadavere, et sanctificabit caput ejus die illa.

12. Et separabit Jehovæ dies separationis suæ, afferetque agnum anniculum pro delicto: et dies priores erunt irriti, quoniam polluta fuit separatio ejus.

13. Hæc autem est lex Nazaræi, die quo completi fuerint dies separationis ejus, conferet se ad ostium tabernaculi conventionis.

14. Offeretque oblationem suam Jehovæ, agnum anniculum perfectum unum in holocaustum, et agnam unam anniculam perfectam in sacrificium pro peccato, et arietem unum perfectum in hostiam prosperitatum.

15. Canistrum præterea *panum* infermentatorum, similam placentarum conspersarum oleo, et lagana infermentata uncta oleo, et minham eorum, et libamina eorum.

16. Et offeret *illa* sacerdos coram Jehova, facietque sacrificium pro peccato illius, et holocaustum illius.

17. Arietem quoque faciet sacrificium prosperitatum Jehovæ, una cum canistro infermentatorum: faciet item sacerdos minham ejus, et libamen ejus.

18. Tum radet Nazaræus ad ostium tabernaculi conventionis caput separationis suæ, capietque cæsariem capitis separationis suæ, et ponet super ignem qui est subter sacrificium prosperitatum.

19. Capiet præterea sacerdos armum coctum de ariete illo, et placentam infermentatam unam e ca-

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and one unleavened wafer, and shall put *them* upon the hands of the Nazarite, after *the hair of* the separation is shaven.

20. And the priest shall wave them *for* a wave-offering before the Lord: this *is* holy for the priest, with the wave-breast and heave-shoulder: and after that the Nazarite may drink wine.

21. This *is* the law of the Nazarite who hath vowed, *and of* his offering unto the Lord for his separation, besides *that* that his hand shall get: according to the vow which he vowed, so he must do after the law of his separation.

nistro, et laganum infermentatum unum, et ponet super manus Nazaræi, postquam rasa fuerit separatio ejus.

20. Et elevabit ea sacerdos elevatione coram Jehova: sanctitas est sacerdotii ultra pectusculum elevationis, et ultra armum exaltationis, et postea bibat Nazaræus vinum.

21. Hæc est lex Nazaræi qui voverit, et oblationis ejus Jehovæ pro separatione sua, præter id quod attinget manus ejus: secundum votum suum quod voverit, sic faciet secundum legem separationis suæ.

2. *When either man or woman shall separate themselves.* God recently appointed a tribute for every soul, whereby the Israelites were to acknowledge that they were His children. By that profession, then, he bound them all to Himself from the least to the greatest. A closer tie of obligation is now treated of, when any should voluntarily devote himself to God for a season. These were called Nazarites, which is equivalent to *separate* or *select*, because there was greater dignity or excellence in them than in the common people. For they were as ornaments to the Church, and God willed that His peculiar glory should shine brightly in them. When, therefore, Amos expostulates with them (ii. 11) because they had prevented the prophets from exercising their office, and had corrupted the Nazarites with wine, he says, in amplification of their crime, that they had been honoured with a special blessing, when God had created of their sons Nazarites and prophets. And when Jeremiah deplores the desolation of the Church, he insists on this corruption, that their Nazarites no longer appeared as of old, "purer than snow," &c. (Lament. iv. 7.) Nor is it to be doubted, that when Jacob distinguished Joseph his son by the title of a Nazarite[1] among his brethren, (Gen. xlix. 26,) he alluded in the spirit of prophecy to that degree of honour in which afterwards, under the Law, they stood who separated themselves

[1] The Hebrew word rendered *separate* in the *A. V.* of Gen. xlix. 26, is נזיר, *Nazir.—W.* Vide *C. in loco.*

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unto God, as the lights of the Church. Therefore, although this consecration pertained not to the whole people, yet it should be deservedly reckoned amongst the exercises of piety, because the Nazarites were like standard-bearers to shew others the way; and though they did not attract all to follow their example, yet the ardour of their zeal was of no little advantage to the weak and inexperienced, exciting them forwards according to their capacity.

Now, because God abominates all fictitious worship, he put a restraint on their licentiousness, by giving them a clear and certain rule. And, from the testimony of Amos which I have just quoted, it is gathered that God alone was the appointer of the Nazarite vow. We must remember, then, that the Nazarites shone among the people of God like precious jewels, and although few imitated them, yet that they were as standard-bearers and leaders to awaken zeal amongst the multitude for the service of God. We must observe, by the way, that Samson was a Nazarite of another kind, because he did not take the vow upon him only for a season, but was sanctified from the womb for his whole life, and separated from the rest of the people; in which respect, too, he was a type of Christ, and represented Him, as it were. And surely whatever is here taught should be referred to the sole Fountain of sanctity, as if the image of Christ had been set before the eyes of the Jews in a mirror. For the nearer any one under the Law approached to God, the more did Christ shine forth in him. We know that the whole priesthood of the Law was nothing but His image. The same may be said of the Nazarites, whose purity and abstinence ornamented them with peculiar dignity.

3. *He shall separate himself from wine.* The first injunction is, that they should not only abstain from wine, but that they should not even taste grapes or anything connected with wine. The simple observance was, that they should not drink wine or anything inebriating; but, because men are crafty in inventing subterfuges, it was necessary to express specifically the means whereby the Law might be defrauded. Thus, in abstaining from wine, they would not have deprived themselves of luxuries, either by indulging in

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fresh or dried grapes, or by mixing water with grapes and expressing their juice, or by imitating the sweetness of wine by other delicate preparations. Hence it appears how many secret recesses and lurking-places are possessed by man's hypocrisy, whilst it shamelessly imagines stupid means of deception for cheating God himself. But, at the same time, we must remark that this subtlety was intolerable to God, who is pleased by nothing so much as sincerity. We shall also see elsewhere that the priests, when they were executing their office by turns in the Temple, were forbidden the use of wine. This similarity proves what I have already said, that the Nazarites were thus separated from the multitude, that they might approach to the honour of the priesthood. But abstinence from wine was enjoined not only that they might avoid drunkenness, but that their whole mode of living might be more temperate and frugal; for the drinking of wine is well known to be among the chief pleasures of the table, and those who are not abstemious will rather content themselves with moderate and common food than bear to be deprived of wine. We may, then, learn from hence, that a sober use of wine is a most important part of temperate living; and in all gluttony and intemperance, this is most to be condemned, when men have too great a love of excess in wine-drinking. It is then astonishing that when the monks under the Papacy boast of their angelical perfection, they should with one accord refuse to abstain from wine. With many[1] it is sinful to touch during their whole life a bit of beef or pork, and they would glory in being martyrs, if they obstinately preferred to die rather than to eat meat in a case of necessity; but their temperance is so inconsistent, that this austerity as to food acquires for them the greater license in drinking, as if they purposely avenged themselves in this way.[2] Wherefore nothing can be more insufferable than their boasting, since this abstinence in eating alone is a mere mockery of God.

5. *There shall no razor come upon his head.* It cannot be certainly determined why God would have the Nazarites let

[1] "Aux Chartreux;" with the Carthusian monks.—*Fr.*
[2] Addition *Fr.*—Sur le gobelet.

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their hair grow, except that by this present mark of their consecration, they might be more and more reminded of their vow. Some think that it was a mark of honour, as if they wore a crown on their heads. In this the Popish clergy are more than ridiculous, comparing themselves to the Nazarites by their circular tonsure.[1] But this reason satisfies myself, that God would constantly exercise them in the faithful performance of their vow by this visible sign. It is a mark of manhood to cut the hair, and this, as Paul says, a natural feeling dictates. (1 Cor. xi. 14.) Therefore, the dedication of the Nazarites was shewn conspicuously by their heads, lest they should fail in their own vows through carelessness or forgetfulness. A question arises respecting the women, for whom this command appears superfluous; but this is easily answered, that they were thus bound to let their hair grow, so as to have it long not only from custom, but in accordance with their vow. Yet there will be nothing absurd in the *synecdoche*, whereby that is spoken of both the sexes which applies only to the males. Here also the devil formerly played his game, when he persuaded certain monks, as Augustine relates,[2] to make a shew of sanctity by wearing long hair; for, in order that the celibacy which they had vowed might be more conspicuous, they would not allow themselves to be men, having "made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake;" (Mat. xix. 12;) and, therefore, their long hair was a sign of their virginity. This example teaches us to beware of the wiles of Satan, lest our κακοζηλία make us rather the apes than the imitators of the ancients.

6. *He shall come at no dead body.* This, too, they had in common with the high-priest, that they were not even to mourn for their relations. Although Moses enjoins two things, that the Nazarites should make themselves unclean

[1] "Sous l'ombre de la couronne, qu'ils appellent, quand ils ne sont pas rasez par les bors;" with reference to the *crown*, as they call it, when their heads are not shaved round the edges.—*Fr.*

[2] De opere Monachorum, 40. (Edit. Benedict. t. vi. 501.) "Jam illud, si dici potest, quam luctuosè ridiculum est, quod rursus invenerunt ad defensionem crinium suorum. Virum, inquiunt, prohibuit Apostolus habere comam; qui autem se ipsos castraverunt propter regnum cœlorum, jam non sunt viri. O dementiam singularem! &c."

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neither by entering the house of mourning, nor by mourning themselves, it was indeed a duty of humanity to bury the dead; but if any of the people had touched a dead body, or had come near a death-bed or bier, they were polluted. But God demands more of the Nazarites, lest they should contract uncleanness; for it was not sufficient for them (as will be seen again presently) to purify themselves according to the accustomed means, but it behoved them to be far removed from all things that would pollute them. But why the touch of a dead body was a pollution, we shall consider more at large in its proper place. Now it must be briefly concluded, that because by death is represented God's curse, the wages of sin, the Israelites were thus admonished to beware of dead works.[1] As to the mourning, the reason of the prohibition was different, viz., that those who professed the special service of God, should set an example to others of magnanimity and submission. If it were sinful to weep and lament when our friends are taken from us, Christ would not have wept at the tomb of Lazarus; but because perturbation is always associated with grief, and men in their mourning are too apt to give way to ambition and pomp, and voluntarily and purposely provoke themselves to excess, as though nature did not already carry them further than is right, the Nazarites could not give an example of moderation, if they had mixed themselves with mourners. Wherefore, as they were before restrained from daintiness, so now a remedy is applied to the opposite disease, viz., to sorrow. But, although all ought to seek to indulge it moderately, yet something more is prescribed to the Nazarites, that, as if disentangled and stripped from earthly affections, they should go further than the rest of the people; as we shall see hereafter with respect to the priests.

9. *And if any man die very suddenly.* Here is prescribed what must be done, if a defilement should have been contracted which no precaution could have prevented. If a Nazarite should have willingly and knowingly entered a house of mourning, or should have come near a dead body, his consecration would have been violated not without sin;

[1] "Comme l'Apostre les nomme;" as the Apostle calls them.—*Fr.*

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but, in the case of a sudden death, the error was excusable, though God commands that it should be expiated; for whatever time of the vow had passed He counts for nothing, nor will it be taken into account. This was no light punishment, that he, who had been guilty of no fault, should begin to pay his vow altogether afresh. Besides the loss of the time, a sacrifice is also added, whereby he who was polluted should prepare himself for a new consecration. But, because this consecration was voluntary, none could complain of the immoderate rigour to which he had subjected himself of his own accord. Meanwhile, it was shewn how precious to God is the purity of His worship. [1]Two Hebrew words from different roots, though they are of kindred signification, are used, by which mode of speaking Moses wished more fully to express the unexpected nature of the death. For, in my opinion, it is puerile of the Jews to understand the first of a bloody murder, the other of a sudden death.

13. *And this is the law of the Nazarites.* Moses now shews at last how, after the full period of the vow, the Nazarites must return to their common life. And, first, he commands them to place themselves at the door of the tabernacle; then, to offer there a lamb without spot for a burnt-offering, a ewe-lamb for a sin-offering, and a ram for peace-offerings, with cakes of fine flour mingled with oil, wafers, and unleavened bread, and meat-offering, and drink-offerings. As to the peace-offering, because it was presented in thanksgiving, it was by no means inappropriate; nor the burnt-offering either, because they might justly congratulate themselves, and celebrate God's goodness, when they had discharged their pious duty, since God had vouchsafed them no ordinary honour. But what was meant by the sin-offering may be questioned, since expiation was needless for the pure and holy. Here we clearly perceive, that however cheerfully and earnestly men endeavour to offer themselves altogether to God, yet they never attain to the goal of perfection, nor arrive at what they desire, but are always

[1] פתע פתאם. Each means *suddenly*. *A. V.*, *very suddenly*. It is a rule of Hebrew Grammar that the use of two synonymous words is to be considered as a mode of expressing a superlative.—*W.*

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exposed to God's judgment, unless He should pardon their sins. Whence it appears how base is the Papists' folly, when they dream of appeasing God by works of supererogation. For, if ever any supererogation were pleasing to God, the holiness of the Nazarites, being testified to by the Law, was worthy of this honour; yet God, when the work is complete, commands them to confess their guilt, and suffers not this service to intrude into the place of merit, but requires of them a sacrifice, that they may borrow from elsewhere what belongs not to themselves, though they appear to be the most perfect of all men.

Another Supplement as to offering the First Fruits.[1]

DEUTERONOMY, CHAPTER XXVI.

1. And it shall be, when thou *art* come in unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee *for* an inheritance, and possessest it, and dwellest therein,

2. That thou shalt take of the first of all the fruit of the earth, which thou shalt bring of thy land that the Lord thy God giveth thee, and shalt put *it* in a basket, and shalt go unto the place which the Lord thy God shall choose to place his name there.

3. And thou shalt go unto the priest that shall be in those days, and say unto him, I profess this day unto the Lord thy God, that I am come unto the country which the Lord sware unto our fathers for to give us.

4. And the priest shall take the basket out of thine hand, and set it down before the altar of the Lord thy God.

5. And thou shalt speak and say before the Lord thy God, A Syrian ready to perish *was* my father; and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there with a few, and be-

1. Quum autem ingressus fueris terram quam Jehova Deus tuus dat tibi in hæreditatem, et possederis eam, et habitaveris in ea:

2. Tunc accipies de primitiis omnium fructuum terræ, quas afferes e terra tua quam Jehova Deus tuus dat tibi, et pones in canistro: ibisque ad locum quem elegerit Jehova Deus tuus, ut illic habitare faciat nomen suum.

3. Et venies ad sacerdotem qui erit in diebus illis, dicesque illi, Annuntio hodie Jehovæ Deo tuo quod ingressus sum terram quam juravit Jehova patribus nostris se daturum nobis.

4. Capietque sacerdos canistrum e manu tua, et ponet illud coram altari Jehovæ Dei tui.

5. Et loqueris, ac dices coram Jehova Deo tuo, Syrus *ille* inopia laborans pater meus descendit in Ægyptum, et peregrinatus est illic cum viris paucis, et evasit illic in

[1] Heading from the French, "Autre dependence d'offrir les premices."

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came there a nation, great, mighty, and populous:

6. And the Egyptians evil entreated us, and afflicted us, and laid upon us hard bondage:

7. And when we cried unto the Lord God of our fathers, the Lord heard our voice, and looked on our affliction, and on our labour, and our oppression:

8. And the Lord brought us forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with great terribleness, and with signs, and with wonders:

9. And he hath brought us into this place, and hath given us this land, *even* a land that floweth with milk and honey.

10. And now, behold, I have brought the first-fruits of the land which thou, O Lord, hast given me. And thou shalt set it before the Lord thy God, and worship before the Lord thy God.

11. And thou shalt rejoice in every good *thing* which the Lord thy God hath given unto thee, and unto thine house, thou, and the Levite, and the stranger that *is* among you.

NUMB. xv. 17. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

18. Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land whither I bring you;

19. Then it shall be, that, when ye eat of the bread of the land, ye shall offer up an heave-offering unto the Lord.

20. Ye shall offer up a cake of the first of your dough *for* an heave-offering: as *ye do* the heave-offering of the thrashing-floor, so shall ye heave it.

21. Of the first of your dough ye shall give unto the Lord an heave-offering in your generations.

EXOD. xxii. 29. Thou shalt not delay *to offer* the first of thy ripe-fruits, and of thy liquors.

EXOD. xxiii. 19. The first of the

gentem magnam, robustam et multam.

6. Molestia autem nos affecerunt Ægyptii, et afflixerunt nos, imposueruntque nobis servitutem duram.

7. Clamavimus itaque ad Jehovam Deum patrum nostrorum, et exaudivit Jehova vocem nostram, et aspexit afflictionem nostram, et laborem nostrum, et oppressionem nostram.

8. Et eduxit nos ex Ægypto cum manu forti, ac brachio extento, et terrore magno, et signis, atque portentis.

9. Et introduxit nos ad locum istum, deditque nobis terram istam, terram fluentem lacte et melle.

10. Nunc igitur, ecce, attuli primitias fructus terræ quam dedisti mihi, O Jehova; et relinques illud coram Jehova Deo tuo, atque adorabis coram Jehova Deo tuo.

11. Et lætaberis in omni bono quod dederit tibi Jehova Deus tuus et domui tuæ, tu et Levita, et peregrinus qui est in medio tui.

17. Loquutus est Jehova ad Mosen, dicendo,

18. Alloquere filios Israel, et dicas eis: Quum ingressi fueritis terram ad quam ego introduco vos.

19. Tum fiet, quum incipietis comedere de pane terræ, offeretis in oblationem Jehovæ.

20. De primitiis conspersionum vestrarum: placentam offeretis in oblationem: sicut oblationem areæ, sic offeretis illam.

21. De primitiis conspersionum vestrarum dabitis Jehovæ, oblationem per generationes vestras.

29. Plenitudinem tuam et lachrymam tuam non differes.

19. Primitias frugum novarum

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first-fruits of thy land thou shalt bring into the house of the Lord thy God.

terræ tuæ adduces in domum Jehovæ Dei tui.

EXOD. xxxiv. 26. The first-fruits of thy land thou shalt bring unto the house of the Lord thy God.

26. Principium primitivorum terræ tuæ inferes in domum Jehovæ Dei tui.

1. *And it shall be when thou art come.* The Israelites are commanded to offer their first-fruits, for the same reason that they were to pay the tribute for every soul; viz., that they might confess that they themselves, and all that they had, belonged to God. This was the only distinction, that the tribute was a symbol of their emancipation, that they might acknowledge themselves to be free, as having been redeemed by the special mercy of God; but by the first-fruits they testified that the land was tributary to God, and that they were masters of it by no other title than as tenants at will, so that the direct sovereignty and property of it remained with God alone. This, then, was the object of the first-fruits, that they might renew every year the recollection of their adoption; because the land of Canaan was given to them as their peculiar inheritance, in which they were to worship God in piety and holiness, and at the same time reflect that they were not fed promiscuously, like the Gentiles, by God, but like children; whence also their food was sacred. But we shall have to speak again elsewhere of the first-fruits, in as much as they were a part of the oblations; yet it was necessary to insert here their main object, that we might know that they were appointed to be offered by the people, in pious acknowledgment that their food was received from God, and to shew that, being separated from other nations, they were dependent upon the God of Israel alone.

2. *That thou shalt take of the first.* We know that in the first-fruits the whole produce of the year was consecrated to God. The people,[1] therefore, bore in them a testimony of their piety to Him, whom they daily experienced to be their

[1] "Ainsi les enfans d'Israel apportoyent en leur corbeille une protestation qu'ils se vouloyent ranger à Dieu comme enfans, selon qu'ils l'experimentoyent Pere nourissier;" thus the children of Israel bore in their basket a protestation that they desired to rank themselves as God's children, since they daily experienced Him to be their nursing Father.—*Fr.*

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preserver, and the giver of their food. This typical rite has now, indeed, ceased, but Paul tells us that the true observation of it still remains, where he exhorts us, whether we eat or drink, to do all to the glory of God. (1 Cor. x. 31.) As to the place where the first-fruits were to be offered, and why God is said to have placed His name there, we shall hereafter consider, when we come to the sacrifices; I now only briefly touch upon what concerns the present subject.

3. *I profess this day.* In these words the Israelites confess that they had not gained dominion of the land either by their own strength or good fortune, but by the free gift of God, and that according to His promise. There are, therefore, two clauses in this sentence; *first*, that God had gratuitously promised to grant that land to Abraham as the inheritance of his descendants; and, *secondly*, that He had performed His promise, not only when He had brought the children of Abraham into possession, but by adding to His grace by their peaceful enjoyment of it. He pursues the same point more fully immediately afterwards, where the Israelites are commanded to declare how wretched was the condition of their fathers, before the Lord embraced them with His favour, and vouchsafed unto them His mercy. The original word in verse 5, meaning to *answer*, I translate simply, according to the Hebrew idiom, to *speak* or *say;* unless to *testify* be thought better, which would be very suitable; for the solemn profession is here described, whereby they bound themselves every year to God. They do not count their origin from Abraham, but from Jacob, in whose person God's grace shone forth more brightly; for being compelled to fly from the land of Canaan, he had spent a good part of his life in Syria, (for he did not return home, till he was old,) and then, being again driven into Egypt by the famine, he had at length died there. The land had not, therefore, fallen to them by hereditary right, nor by their own efforts; their father Jacob not having been permitted even to sojourn there. They call him a Syrian, because when he had married Laban's daughters, and had begotten children, and was stricken in years before he had returned home, he might seem to have renounced the land of Canaan. Since then he

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had been content for many years with the dwelling which he chose for himself in Syria, his descendants justly confessed that he was a pilgrim and stranger, because of his long exile; and for the same reason that they also might be counted foreigners. They add that their father Jacob again abandoned the land of Canaan when he was forced by the famine to go down into Egypt; and whilst they recount that he sojourned there with a few, and afterwards grew into a mighty nation, they thus acknowledge that they were Egyptians, since they had sprung from thence, where was the beginning of their name and race. In the rest of the passage they further confirm the fact that they were led into the land of Canaan by the hand of God; because when they were oppressed by tyranny, they cried unto Him, and were heard. They are commanded also to celebrate the signs and wonders whereby their redemption was more clearly manifested, in order that they should unhesitatingly give thanks to God, and contrast His pure worship with all the imaginations of the heathen: otherwise, this would have been but a cold exercise of piety. What follows in the last verse, "And thou shalt rejoice," &c., seems indeed to have been a promise, as if God, by setting before them the assurance of His blessing, added a stimulus to arouse the people to more cheerful affection; but the sense would appear more clear and natural if the *copula* were changed into the temporal adverb *then;* for this is the main thing in the use of our meat and drink, with a glad and joyful conscience to accept it as a testimony of God's paternal favour. Nothing is more wretched than doubt; and therefore Paul especially requires of us this confidence, bidding us eat not without faith. (Rom. xiv. 23.) In order, then, to render the Israelites more prompt in their duty, Moses reminds them that they would only be able to rejoice freely in the use of God's gifts, if they should have expressed their gratitude as He commanded.

NUMBERS XV. 20. *Ye shall offer up a cake.* Here another kind of first-fruits is required, to offer up sacred cakes of the first of their dough. First-fruits were offered of their fruits and ears of corn; but the representation was more lively in

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the bread itself; and, consequently, God would have them present tokens of their gratitude, not only from the barn, but from the mill, and the oven, so that whilst they eat their bread also, they might have Him before their eyes.

EXODUS XXII. 29. *Thou shalt not delay.* We may gather from this passage that the first-fruits were offered, to the end that the Israelites should devote themselves and their possessions to God; for Moses enjoins these two things in conjunction, that they should not delay to consecrate to God of the abundance of their fresh fruits, and their first-born. But we know that, in offering the first-born, the recollection of their deliverance was revived, by the acknowledgment of the preservation of their race, and of their cattle. And there was, moreover, added to the grace of their redemption, the continual supply of food to them from day to day. I do not assent to their opinion who restrict the word *fulness*[1] to wine, because it flows more abundantly from the press, and take the word *tear*[1] to mean oil, because it runs less freely; nor do I approve of their notion who apply *fulness* only to dry fruits. It seems to me more proper to take *fulness* as the generic term, whilst *tear* is taken to denote liquids, as if Moses commanded them not only to offer grapes, and olive-berries, but the very drops which were expressed from the fruit. The other passages confirm this command, that they should not defraud God of the first-fruits, and so bury the remembrance of their redemption, and profane themselves in their very eating and drinking, but rather by this portion of the fruits sanctify the food of the whole year. Nor is it causelessly that Moses so often inculcates a point by no means obscure, since all these admonitions were despised and neglected by the Jews, as soon as they had returned from the Babylonish captivity, as Malachi complains in his third chapter.

[1] *Vide* margin, *A. V.*

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Another Supplement as to the Purification of Women after their Confinement.[1]

LEVITICUS, CHAPTER XII.

1. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

2. Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a woman have conceived seed, and born a man-child: then she shall be unclean seven days; according to the days of the separation for her infirmity shall she be unclean.

3. And in the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised.

4. And she shall then continue in the blood of her purifying three and thirty days: she shall touch no hallowed thing, nor come into the sanctuary, until the days of her purifying be fulfilled.

5. But if she bear a maid-child, then she shall be unclean two weeks, as in her separation; and she shall continue in the blood of her purifying threescore and six days.

6. And when the days of her purifying are fulfilled, for a son, or for a daughter, she shall bring a lamb of the first year for a burnt-offering, and a young pigeon, or a turtle-dove, for a sin-offering, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, unto the priest:

7. Who shall offer it before the Lord, and make an atonement for her; and she shall be cleansed from the issue of her blood. This *is* the law for her that hath born a male or a female.

8. And if she be not able to bring a lamb, then she shall bring two turtles, or two young pigeons; the one for the burnt-offering, and the other for a sin-offering: and the priest shall make an atonement for her, and she shall be clean.

1. Et loquutus est Jehova ad Mosen, dicendo:

2. Loquere ad filios Israel, dicendo, Mulier si misso semine conceperit, et pepererit masculum, immunda erit septem diebus: juxta dies separationis morbi sui immunda erit.

3. Porro die octavo circuncidetur caro præputii ejus.

4. Et triginta tribus diebus sedebit in sanguine purificationis: nullam rem sacram tanget, et ad sanctuarium non veniet, donec completi fuerint dies purificationis suæ.

5. Quod si fœminam pepererit, immunda erit duabus hebdomadibus, secundum separationem suam, et sexaginta sex diebus sedebit in sanguine purificationis suæ.

6. Postquam autem impleti fuerint dies purificationis suæ pro filio vel pro filia, afferet agnum anniculum in holocaustum, et pullum columbæ, aut turturem, in oblationem pro peccato, ad ostium tabernaculi conventionis ad sacerdotem.

7. Et offeret ipsum coram Jehova: et expiabit eam, et mundabitur a vena sanguinis sui. Hæc est lex parientis masculum vel fœminam.

8. Quod si non potuerit offerre agnum, tunc accipiet duos turtures, aut duos pullos columbæ, unum in holocaustum, et alterum ad oblationem pro peccato: expiabitque eam sacerdos, et mundabitur.

[1] Heading from the French, "Autre dependence de purifier les femmes apres leur enfantement."

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2. *If a woman have conceived seed.* This ceremony had reference to two points; for, first, the Jews were reminded by it of the common corruption of our nature; and *secondly*, the remedy of the evil was set before them. There is little difficulty in understanding why a woman who has conceived and given birth to a child, should be pronounced unclean; viz., because the whole race of Adam is polluted and defiled, so that the woman already contracts uncleanness from the offspring which she bears in the womb, and is further contaminated by giving it birth. Hence it appears how foul and disgusting in God's sight is our condition, since at our birth, and even before it, we infect our mothers. It has been almost universally, but very absurdly, considered that nothing is here condemned but libidinous intercourse between male and female; whereas the purification is not required except there be offspring; and to this the word תזריע, *thazriang*, refers, which can only be properly translated by *insemination*, and therefore it must be carefully observed that impurity in intercourse is not generally condemned here, but in generation. For the cohabitation of man and woman in itself, without reference to offspring, is a matter of shame and indecency; but here the procreation of children, which should remove this indecency, is accounted the cause of pollution, because the whole race of Adam is full of contagion. Hence the error of Pelagius[1] is clearly refuted, who denied that the sin of Adam was propagated among his descendants, and pretended that we contracted sin from our parents not by origin, but by imitation. For the mother would not be unclean if the children were pure and free from all defilement. Therefore God would by this rite teach His ancient people that all men are born accursed, and bring into the world with them an hereditary corruption which pollutes their very mothers. If any object that holy matrimony is thus brought into disgrace and disrepute, the reply is easy, that if the marriage couch is free from stain, it is due to the indulgence of God. When therefore the husband and wife procreate children in lawful wedlock, it is not to be con-

[1] Une heretique ancien nommé Pelage.—*Fr.*

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sidered simply permitted, as if the generation were altogether without impurity, but by special privilege and indulgence; because the sanctity of marriage covers what otherwise might be imputed to blame, and purifies the very defilements of our guilty nature. Whence it is plain that marriage, through which the procreation of children becomes lawful, has nothing disgraceful about it. Yet it does not follow that the children who are thus engendered are holy and free from stain; for those who are born to unbelievers, remain under the guilt of the curse; and those who owe their birth to believers, are delivered from the common perdition by supernatural grace, and special adoption. And this God desired openly and distinctly to testify, by requiring a sacrifice for their purification. For although Moses seems only to speak of the mother, St. Luke,[1] his faithful interpreter, includes also the infant. If it be asked whether circumcision would not suffice to remove the stain of corrupt nature, I reply that hence it more clearly appears how great is our impurity, since God was not content with one symbol for its expurgation, but in order that He might exercise His people in continual meditation upon it, added another subsidiary sign, and did this especially because He knew how profound is men's hypocrisy, with what self-complacency they flatter themselves in vice, how difficult it is to humble their pride, and, when they are forced to acknowledge their miseries, how easily forgetfulness creeps over them. Wherefore, when circumcision is expressly mentioned here, I presume it is by anticipation, lest the Israelites should object that circumcision was given them for the very purpose of altogether removing the curse; and therefore God signifies that, although circumcision should precede it, still the purification which He here enjoins would not be superfluous. The foolish comments of the Rabbins on this passage respecting seed, are both ridiculous in themselves, and unfitted by their filthiness for modest ears; since, as we have said, the simple intention of Moses was that the woman should undergo purification, if offspring should follow her intercourse. Now, since the Son of God, although He

[1] The allusion is, I suppose, to Luke ii. 23.

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was not only pure, but purity itself, still was the representative of the human race, He subjected himself to the Law; and (as Paul teaches) submitted Himself to the Law, "to redeem them that were under the Law." (Gal. iii. 13, and iv. 5.) And, by this His voluntary submission to it, He abrogated the old rite; so that it is not now necessary to bring infants to the visible tabernacle with the sacrifices, but all purity is to be sought in Himself.

4. *And she shall then continue.* The uncleanness of seven days in the case of a male, and fourteen days for a female, has reference to the hemorrhage, as we shall also see elsewhere of the menstrual discharge. For the remainder of the time she is forbidden to take part in religious services, and to approach the sanctuary, (by which word the court is here meant,) and thus is accounted unholy, not only that she should herself lament her condition, but that her husband also, admonished by the sight, should learn to abhor and detest original sin. For this was a serious exhortation to repentance, when they acknowledged that they were contaminated in their offspring, wherein otherwise God's blessing manifests itself. The question now arises, why the time of purification is double for a female child? Some ascribe this to a natural cause, viz., because the hemorrhage is then of longer continuance; and in truth it was a part of chastity and continence, that husbands should not then come near their wives. But inasmuch as the object of this ceremony was different, viz., as an indication of the curse on the whole human race, we must look more attentively in this direction. I know not whether the view is sound which some take, that the mother is more defiled by female offspring, because there is more disposition to vice in this sex. Perhaps, it is more probable, as some think, that it was because the woman was the beginning of the rebellion, when, being deceived by the serpent, she destroyed her husband with her, and drew her posterity into the same ruin. But it seems more correct to me that the punishment in regard to males was lightened and diminished by circumcision. For although in that symbol God consecrated both sexes, yet He honoured males with special favour, by engraving His covenant on their flesh.

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Wherefore, also, He expressly mentions their circumcision, whereby a dignity was imparted to them, which rendered them superior to females. At the end of the chapter, regard is had to the poor, lest, being burdened by too great an expense, they might be rendered less ready to obey the Law: whence we gather that God has no care for outward pomp and wealth, since the humble sacrifice of the poor, according to the measure of their poverty, is no less grateful to Him than the more valuable one of the rich.

END OF VOLUME FIRST.

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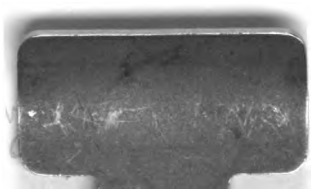
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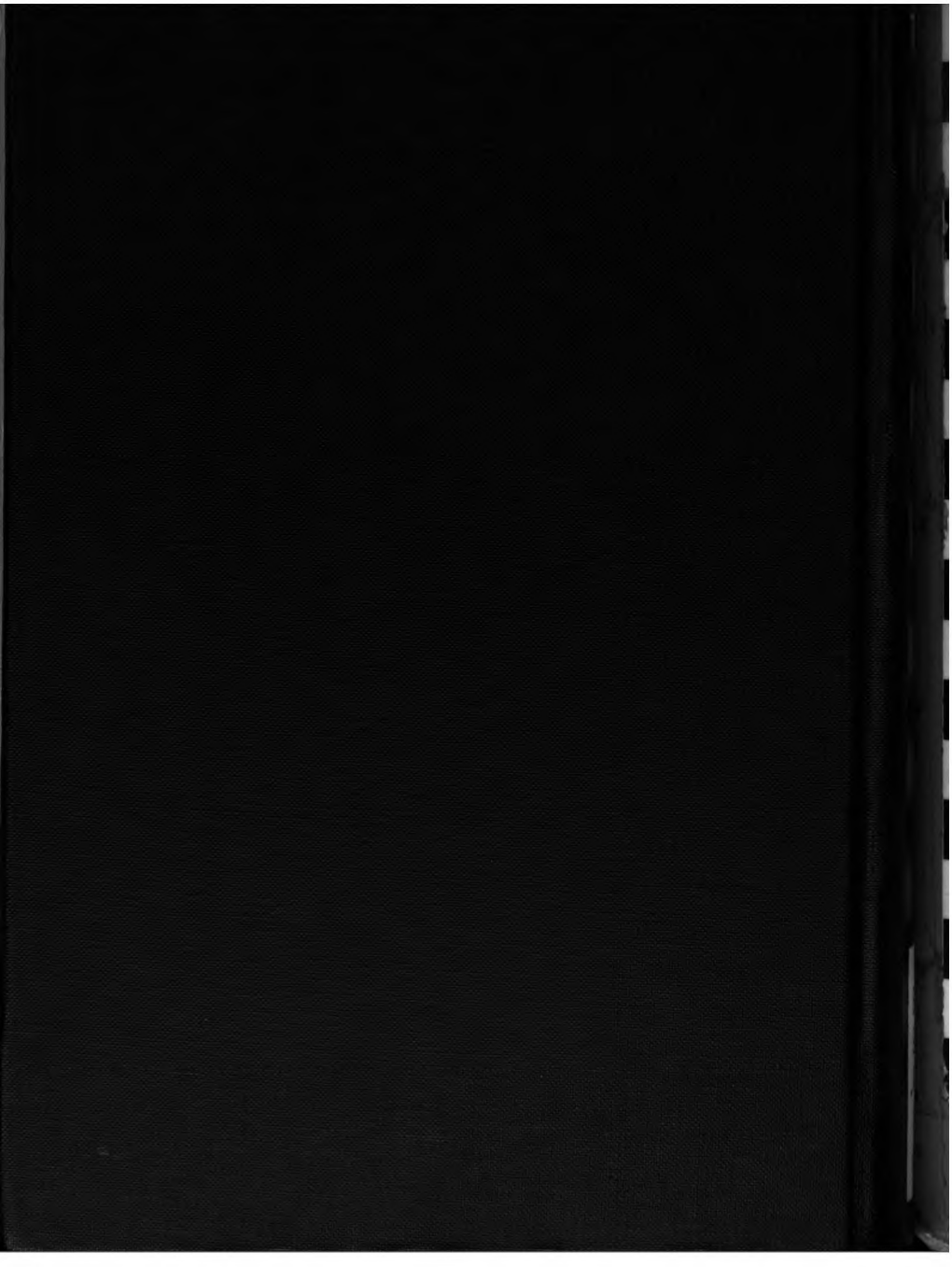
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